

THE Tatler

& Bystander Christmas Number 1959

WHY DO ARTISTS GO TO CHURCH? A DISCUSSION

FURS—THERE'S NO BETTER TIME TO ANGLE FOR THEM

L. P. HARTLEY WRITES A SPECIAL SHORT STORY

HANNAH GLASS'S PIE IS ENOUGH FOR A PARTY

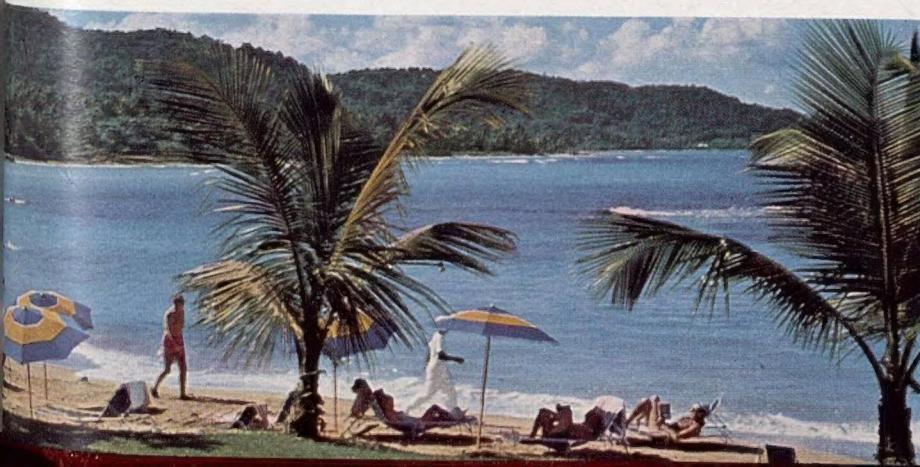
ALAN VINES PORTRAYS MOSCOW'S STATE CIRCUS



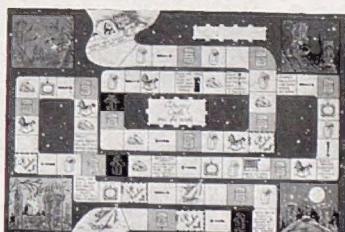
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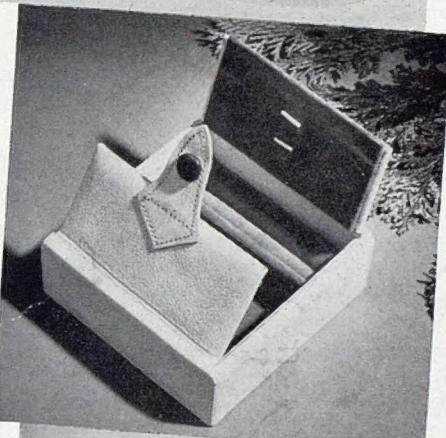
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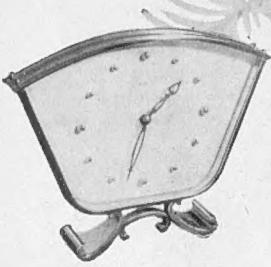


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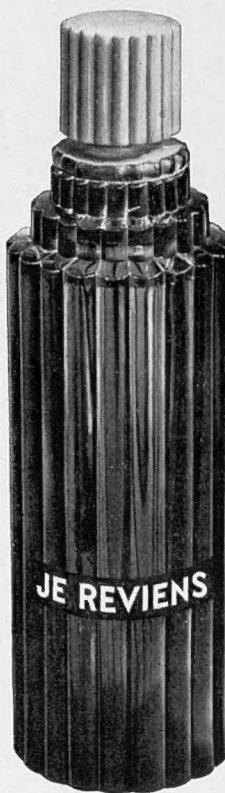
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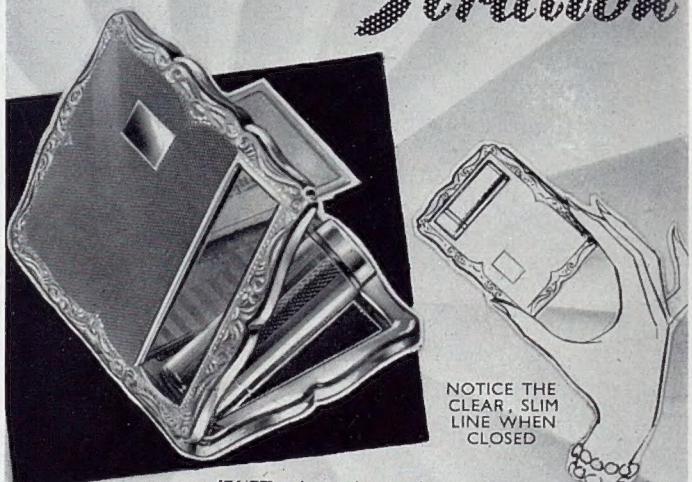
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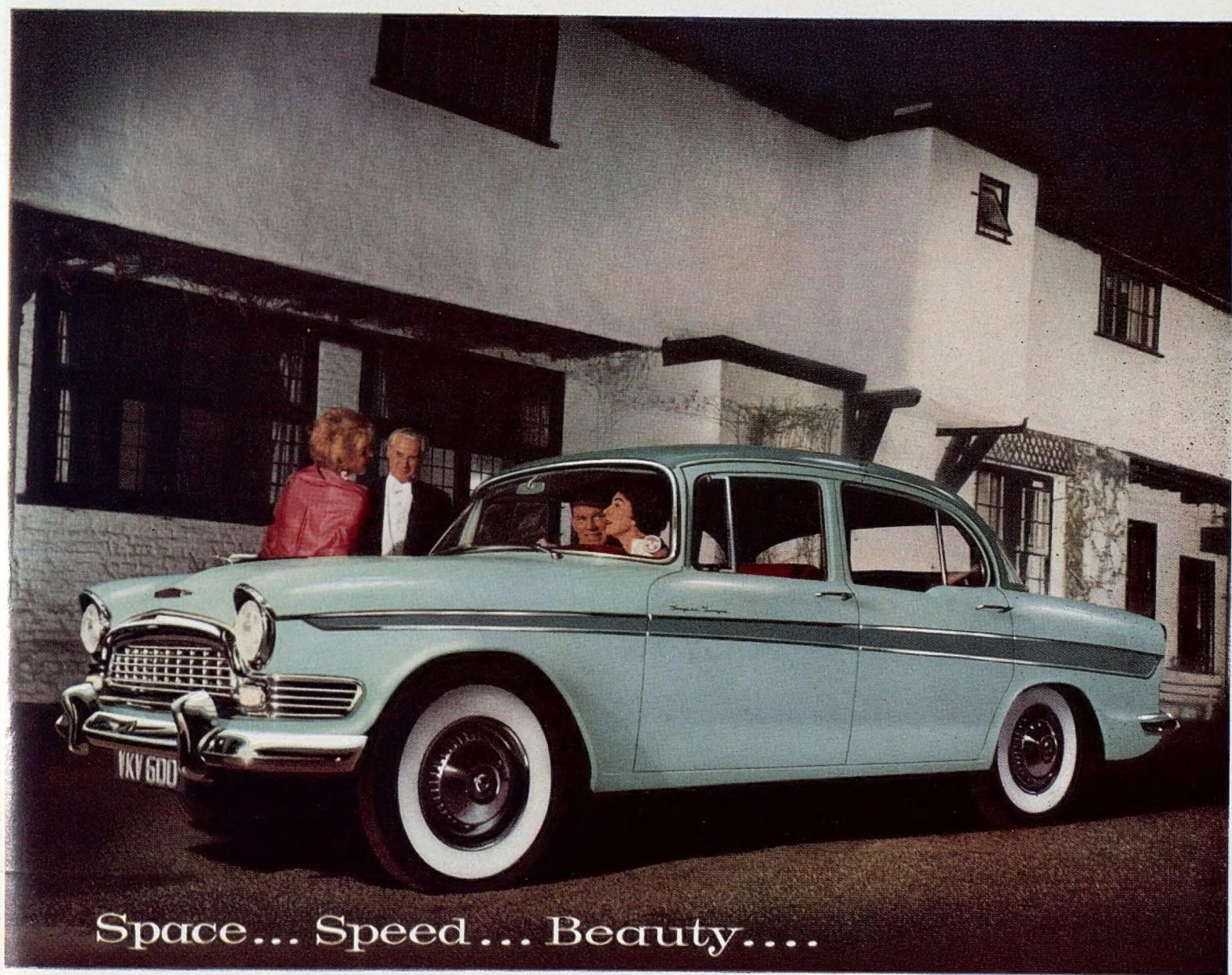
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The Tatler & Bystander

Christmas Number

12 November 1959 · Three shillings & sixpence

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This Christmas Number is an extra issue. The *TATLER AND BYSTANDER*, leading society journal in the United Kingdom, is published weekly at two shillings by Illustrated Newspapers Ltd. *Postage*: Inland, 4d. Canada, 1½d. Foreign, 5½d. Registered as a newspaper for transmission in the United Kingdom. *Subscription Rates*: Great Britain and Eire: Twelve months (including Christmas number), £6 5s. 6d. Six months (including Christmas number) £3 5s.; (without Christmas number), £3 1s. Three months (no extras), £1 10s. 6d. Corresponding rates for Canada: £5 15s., £2 19s., £2 15s., £1 7s. 6d. U.S.A. (dollars): 18.50, 9.50, 9.0, 4.50. Elsewhere abroad: £6 12s., £3 8s., £3 4s., £1 12s.



This great Rubens painting sold this year for a record fee, has raised

some questions about the state of religious art. Why do artists go to church—when they take their paints or chisels, that is? Is it to decorate the place with striking patterns of colour and light, like this **window from Coventry Cathedral.**

Is the old urge to glorify God still there, and was it ever? Has the age of religious masterpieces passed? These are some of the questions discussed by

SIRIOL HUGH-JONES, who has a personal passion for roly-poly Holy babies . . .

THIS IS AN AGE OF MANY CHURCHES AND NO FAITH. Religious art—there is already a self-conscious and uneasy sound about it—has become something you visit in the Sistine Chapel after running through the Botticellis in the Uffizzi. It is something safely put back into the past, the danger and immediacy and excitement gone from it.

In an age of faith—the time, for instance, which we now, with small ground for self-congratulation, call the Dark Ages—you could count on there being an army of master craftsmen toiling away like beavers to the greater glory of God and the Church—and for the sound purpose of earning a living. Architects, masons, wood-carvers, sculptors, gold and silversmiths, painters, experts in stained glass and those nimble self-expression men who were good at gargoyles and rude jokes in woodwork under the choir-stalls—not all of them could have been profoundly devout; and probably not one of them thought of his job as “religious art” when the window-glass went into place in Chartres and the great pillars of Durham Cathedral marched forward. When they made daring experiments, they still had a tradition from which to develop, they worked in terms of symbols and scenes which were familiar and recognizable to all, their work was considered as being as necessary as that of the butcher and the baker. And they were probably similarly cheated of money from time to time in a cheerful secular fashion.

Where would you look nowadays for a man prepared to represent the saints in glory everlasting? The contemporary artist has become a lonely man locked inside himself, evolving and improvising his own idiom, trying to say something that Picasso hasn’t

said better and first. And when and if you find the man, how then to evolve a post-action-painting saint that is not a pastiche, nor a quotation from Our Glorious Artistic Heritage, but a true expression of something that is going to light up a spark, even a small one, in the hearts and minds of the great lost faithless public?

Artists who would now choose to undertake a Christian theme are rare and extremely courageous, and must struggle to express their statements in lonely isolated terms, each man for himself. Roualt did so supremely, so at times did Epstein. Sutherland—a devout Roman Catholic as well as a fine artist—has for me come nearest, in this country, to finding a valid way of expressing Christian belief in contemporary and highly personal terms. I can admire the strange genius of Stanley Spencer, who goes on calmly painting the Resurrection in terms of Cookham, but am at heart left baffled and uninvolved by it.

There are now some small signs of a growing interest in the possibility—and advisability—of commissioning art with a Christian theme before it is too late, and no method of communication can be found. In France the remarkable Père Couturier stimulated such interest, and Leger, of all people, designed stained-glass windows. Matisse worked on the now famous chapel at Vence, and even Cocteau has designed a *chic* fishermen’s chapel on the Riviera. In England some colleges and private patrons were wise enough to commission work from the late Evie Hone—to me the greatest, strongest, simplest and most moving designer of contemporary ecclesiastical stained-glass there has been for many years. And the new Coventry Cathedral provided the marvellous and unique opportunity for three young designers to evolve ten vast windows. They boldly and brilliantly responded, working out an immensely complex scheme that was to symbolize man’s whole human and spiritual life, as well as to use the best elements in stained-glass tradition of the past in a wholly contemporary idiom. The crowded, overlapping symbolism of the windows is a crossword puzzle too obscure and oblique for me, but for colour, design and intensity



The cathedral's two sides have windows depicting God and Man. This one is Lawrence Lee's red window on the 'Man Side' and symbolizes the passage of humanity from childhood (at bottom), through conflict to salvation and other stages. The cover example is also Lee's, this time on the 'God Side'. Pictures are from Dudley Shaw Ashton's film Coventry Cathedral

Il came from the estate of the late Duke of Westminster and it went for £275,000 at Sotheby's. It is Rubens's Adoration of the Magi, a mid-17th-century masterpiece that the public will be able to see in the National Gallery for the next two years. An agreement has been made for it to be hung there on loan after cleaning

ARTISTS IN CHURCH *continued*

THE MADONNA & CHILD IN SCULPTURE:

The late Jacob Epstein's "Holy Child" (top left) is at the Convent of the Holy Child in Cavendish Square. Contrasting with it is (top right) Veit Stoss's "Virgin & Child," carved in boxwood about 1500. Above: Henry Moore's "Madonna & Child" from St. Matthew's Church, Southampton, is set against Antonio Rossellino's "Virgin with Laughing Child" in terracotta (mid 15th century)

of vision they are tremendously exciting and moving.

But I don't think you can yet begin to talk of a *revival* of art based on the Christian theme. When the Contemporary Art Society bravely, and perhaps a touch recklessly, asked for entries for a special show of work with some sort of religious content—the terms were left vague—the most memorable and moving painting to me was a canvas by Derrick Greaves called *Nativity*. It wasn't one of those roly-poly Holy Babies sitting four-square and sacred on the safe blue-robed laps of serene peasant Madonnas—because obviously no one is any longer going to be able to paint those. It was a theme he knew about and cared about in familiar human terms, and that was how he painted it.*

Perhaps Christmas is the only time of year when we can look at "religious art" and see it in terms of personal meaning. The events of Christmas themselves make a good starting-point, for (as it is rare to find a fully-fledged agnostic under the age of five) our association with them begins at a time when the Angel of the Lord might perfectly well descend in glory from among the paper streamers and the tinsel stars, and there is no reason to suppose that God is not a stormy old gentleman with a wild beard who sits in the middle of a hurricane and draws the world with a pair of compasses designed by William Blake. When you believe in the Holy Child as easily as in any other baby it seems to me that this is more or less bound to affect your way of looking at some paintings and sculptures to the end of your days, no matter how keen a follower you may become of Marxism or Logical Positivism or Existentialism or the close-of-play figures on the Stock Exchange.

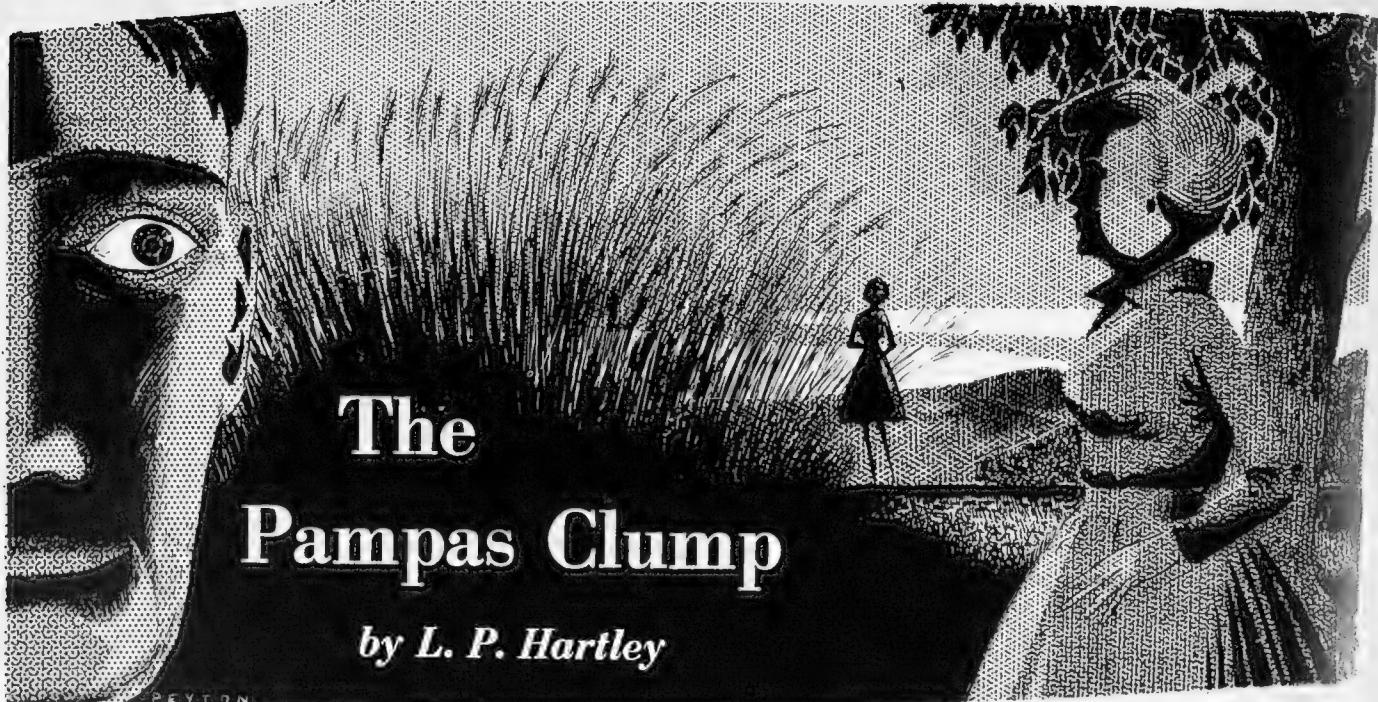
The climate of 1959 England has precious little in common with that of medieval England, when God was as real and frequently as angry as your grandfather and every monastery was bursting with talented monks working away at intricate holy capitals in gold leaf. But I believe that mysterious an angel with a trumpet is still an image of awe and power, even to the most progressive free-thinker of a faith whatever—and a set of infallible art-history conditioned reflexes, which distinguish automatically and infallibly for him between High Renaissance, Mannerists and Baroque angels (and altogether ignore angels soaring in bondage over haberdashery and Christmas Gift departments). *continued on page 52*

* The Religious Theme exhibition of modern religious art is returning to London this month. It will be at the South London Art Gallery (Peckham Road, Camberwell) from 29 November to 19 December.

THE IMMORTAL BRIGGS

BY
GRAHAM





The Pampas Clump

by L. P. Hartley

PEYTON

B

UT WHAT IS IT YOU DON'T LIKE ABOUT THE pampas clump?" I asked.

"Well, it's untidy for one thing," Thomas said. "It doesn't grow evenly and always seems to need a hair cut. A shrub should be symmetrical."

"It isn't exactly a shrub."

"No, it isn't. A shrub would be more self-controlled. It's a sort of grass—and grass needs cutting. Besides, it's all ages at once; some of it's green, some sere, and some dead. And then its leaves break and dangle depressingly."

"But aren't we all like that?"

"Not so obviously. We are more of a piece. Anyone would know that you were forty-one, Fergus, and I was thirty-eight."

I flattered myself that I looked younger than Thomas; there was a deep line between his brows and his eyes behind his spectacles were tired and restless.

"How old is the pampas?"

"Oh, any age. It was here, you may remember, when I bought the house. I've often thought of getting rid of it. It's so suburban. It doesn't fit into an old garden, like this one is supposed to be."

"But if it's old itself?"

"It must be, or it wouldn't have grown to such a size. But that doesn't make it any the less suburban. People live to a great age in suburbia, and sometimes grow to a great size. . . . And besides being untidy, it makes the grass round it untidy too, it sheds itself."

"A plant has to live according to its habit," I argued.

"Yes, but I don't like its habit, or its habits. It offends my sense of fitness. Besides it's dangerous."

"Dangerous?"

"Yes. It looks fragile and wispy, but its leaves are like razors, they cut you to the bone. It's treacherous and dishonest."

"Oh, do you think of it as a person?"

Thomas fidgeted.

"No, of course not, except in so far as something you don't like takes on a personality for you."

"What sort of personality has it?"

"A semi-transparent one. It blocks the view from the French window, but if you look hard you can see through it—or you think you can. I'm always wondering if there isn't someone the other side of it who can see me though I can't see him or her."

"Oh, Thomas, how fanciful you are!"

"Well, you try."

Obediently I screwed my eyes up. The library had two windows, and from the French window, the one nearest the fireplace, by which we were sitting, the pampas clump did indeed block the view. It cut the line of the hills across the valley. In the early October twilight it looked quite enormous; its cone-shaped plumes, stirred by a gentle breeze, swept the dusky sky, soaring above its downward-curving foliage as a many-jetted fountain soars above the water fanning outwards from its basin. And like a fountain it was, as Thomas had said, half-transparent. You thought you could see what was behind it, but you couldn't be sure. That didn't worry me; I rather liked the idea of the mysterious *terra incognita* behind the pampas. And Thomas should have liked it, too. No one ever called him Tom; at Oxford he was nicknamed Didymus, he was so much in doubt. Did he dislike the pampas because, in some way, it reminded him of himself, and his own weaknesses? I strained my eyes again, trying to see what lay beyond the soaring feathers and the looped, drooping, reed-like leaves. Perhaps. . . . Perhaps. . . . What did Thomas want me to say?

"There could be somebody," I ventured.

"That's what I mean."

"But he . . . she . . . they couldn't see you because. . . ."

"Because why?"

"Because when a shrub . . . or something of that sort is near to you, it's more opaque than when it's at a distance. But if you don't like it, why don't you burn it?"

Thomas shuffled in his chair, and answered irritably, "I don't like destroying things. Besides, it would only rise from its ashes like the phoenix."

"But if it annoys you——"

"It doesn't annoy me all that much. Besides . . ." he stopped.

"Besides what?" I prompted.

"You'll think me silly if I tell you."

"I find all your objections to the pampas frivolous," I said, "but tell me."

"Well, I have a sneaking wish to find out if there *is* someone on the other side of it."

I didn't laugh because I realized that what he had said meant something to him, something that had been in his mind for a long time. Was it an obsession that he wanted to get rid of, or was he really clinging to it? A ghost that worried him, but one he didn't want to lay? I had an idea.

"When the others come——"

He glanced up. It was half-past six by the French clock on the chimney piece.

"Are you getting bored?" he asked. "Julia and Hilary will be here any time now."

"I didn't mean that," I said. "I'm glad to have this chance of talking to you alone. It's so long . . . I meant, couldn't we arrange a sort of *test*?"

"Of what?"

"Well, of whether there *is* someone behind the pampas clump or not."

He seemed to ponder deeply.

"I don't know . . . I don't know. What had you in mind?"

"A sort of procession."

"A procession? What sort of procession?"

"I hadn't worked out the details."

Thomas shook his head, fretfully.

"I don't like the idea of a procession. Too many people, and it straggles."

"Oh, this would be a small, select one."

"I don't know what you mean," said Thomas. "I'm not with you." There was a sound outside the house, scrunchings and small earth-tremors, and then a silence that indicated arrival. "Here they are!" said Thomas, getting up and making for the door. "Guests never seem to arrive at exactly the right time."

"Have I your permission—?" I called out after him, but I don't think he heard.

Julia I knew quite well; she was fair and round and buxom and in her middle thirties. She had lost her husband in the war, and curiously enough as a widow she was twice the person she had been as a wife. As a wife she had taken on her husband's personality; as a widow she had recovered her own without losing his. Protectiveness was her strong point, and it was clear she had now extended it to Hilary. While her husband was alive she said "we" more often than she said "I": she said "we" still, meaning herself and Hilary.

Hilary I knew much less well. She was tall and dark and slender and could look beautiful, but her beauty was ambiguous like the rest of her. I could not make her out, and the more I saw of her the less I understood her. A sphinx without a secret, perhaps. But a sphinx that has, I thought, its attractions for Thomas, for he tried on her many kinds of conversational approach, which she either evaded or answered in a way that he didn't quite expect.

"Are you going abroad, Hilary?"

"Well, as a matter of fact I've just been."

"Of course, I knew that. You wrote to me from Venice."

"Did I? I wrote so many letters."

"We were always writing letters," Julia put in, "when we weren't sight-seeing. Hilary writes such good letters."

"Do I? I often think they're all about myself, or nothing."

"Yourself or nothing? Perhaps they are the same," said Thomas with so much feeling in his voice that it cancelled out the rudeness. "It's yourself we want to know about. But perhaps you have several selves. Julia's Hilary may be different from mine, and Fergus's different again."

He raised an eyebrow at me. I thought he carried his probings farther than politeness warranted. She didn't seem to resent them but they embarrassed her; she said the word "I" non-committally and without conviction as if she was not quite sure to what it referred. I didn't want to be drawn but I had to say something—if possible something that would smooth the path for Thomas, who was so obviously taken by her.

"Some American writer said you ought to publish yourself of a personality," I remarked.

"That I ought to?"

We laughed.

"No, that everyone ought to."

Hilary looked troubled.

"That's what I find so difficult!"

"It's one of our problems," Julia said, smiling, though it was certainly not one of hers.

"But are you going abroad in the winter?" Thomas persisted.

"What do you think, Julia?"

Thomas shook his head in mock despair and before Julia could answer burst out, "There you go again! Or rather, you don't go—and when you stay——" He spread his hands out, as though to indicate how inconclusive her staying was.

"We will go now," said Julia hullily, "and leave you to your port."

She rose and we rose with her. Hilary was nearly as tall as Thomas; her full, flared skirt swung as she moved. Her charm showed in her movements; they told one something about her that her tongue could not tell.

"Now I like that dress of yours," said Thomas, "I like those thin Regency stripes, they are so definite—and the neat rows of forget-me-nots in between. As if we could forget you! It's almost a crinoline, isn't it? Who can tell where it ends and you begin?"

She coloured, and I said to cover her confusion, "She's like the pampas clump."

That was how we got back to it again.

It was too dark to do anything now, we decided; tomorrow between tea and dinner, Thomas said, should be the time for our experiment.

"But why so late?" I asked. "Wouldn't it be better in the full sunlight?"

"How do you mean better?"

"Well, a better test. In the twilight you might think you were seeing things."

"We want to see things, don't we?"

"I thought you wanted to make sure, Didymus, that there was nothing . . . or something. As soon as the light begins to go——"

"Doesn't it seem more sporting," he interrupted, "to give the mystery a chance? I don't know how I should feel, after all this time, faced by complete certitude."

"But I thought you wanted it," I repeated, "both as regards the pampas clump and . . . and . . ."

THE
PAMPAS
CLUMP
continued

"And Hilary? Yes, I suppose I do. I want to be sure about her. But shall I be—about either of them—after the experiment? You called me fanciful, a moment ago."

"Whatever happens," I pronounced, "or doesn't happen, it will change the direction of your thoughts. You won't be able to feel quite the same about . . . either of them again."

We began to discuss the ways and means, and then Thomas said, "I think it's time we joined the girls."

Sunday dragged unbearably: I have seldom been so conscious of the passage of time. The house was liberally provided with clocks, most of them the French Empire type—ladies reclining, children holding baskets of fruit and flowers, all leading a timeless, leisured life. There was hardly one I didn't consult, but the clock in my bedroom was my favourite, because it lagged behind the others and gave me a respite. From what? I didn't really think that anything would come of the experiment, but its increasing nearness provoked a sense of crisis. Ridiculous! It couldn't fail to be a flop—although how much of a flop only Thomas and I should know—for we were not going to take the girls into our confidence—or, of course, the pampas clump itself. More than once during the morning, before Julia and Hilary had made their appearance, and while Thomas was still in church, I went out and studied it. It was a great big thing, the size of a small haystack; it dwarfed the lawn, which was large enough in all conscience, as if it had been a round of beef on a dessert-plate. Like other oversize objects it excited in me, at any rate, mixed feelings of wonder and resentment. Denser in some places than in others, it looked densest when I took my stand outside the French window in the library. Which, for the success of the experiment, ought it to be, transparent or opaque? If transparent, how easy it would be to cheat a little, force one's way into its ready heart with a pair of secateurs, and thin it out! No one would be the wiser. But wouldn't they? Might not someone see me from a window? Besides, those leaves like razor-blades! I should come back criss-crossed with scratches, or perhaps cut to the bone and pouring blood! "Why, Fergus, what on earth have you been doing to get into that state?" "Well, Thomas, I tripped and took a header into the pampas clump, and it savaged me, just as you said it would."

Giving the plant a wide berth I circled round it, feeling I was being watched. If only I could divide myself in two: become the subject and the object, as one can in thought, then I could make my *alter ego* face me across the pampas. How exciting to see, if I did see him, another Fergus, not a reflection but a real one, perhaps more real than I was! The essential me, in visible form! I had almost transferred Thomas's problem to myself when I looked up and there he was, only a few feet away from me. I had been too much preoccupied to see or hear him coming.

"Spying out the land?" he asked.

I started.

"Yes, I suppose I was."

He said carelessly:

"You know I've been thinking it over, perhaps in the light of the Christian faith, which you don't seem to hold—"

"I ought to have gone to church with you, I know."

"Don't mention it. What I wanted to say was, perhaps we are not meant to see more clearly than we do—through a pampas clump darkly, and all that, and we'd better drop this scheme of ours. What do you think, Fergus?"

"I should be disappointed. What harm can it do? We should just pass by—"

"Oh, it's the principle of the thing. The idea is all right—quite poetical. But if you tried to *live* poetry—"

"Yes?"

"Well, you might come a cropper. . . . Hallo, here are the girls."

Hilary was walking a little behind Julia, but Thomas addressed himself to her. "Good morning, good morning, but it isn't morning, it's afternoon. What have you been doing with yourselves all this time? What have you been doing, Hilary?"

"Nothing much."

"Nothing much? Couldn't you elaborate that a little?"

"We wrote some letters," Julia said.

"You're always writing letters, Hilary! Always on paper, never in the flesh! Did you say you were staying here?"

"I used your writing-paper."

Thomas tried a more direct approach.

"Did you say what fun you were having?"

"I said how nice it was, of course."

"Did you say anything nice about me?"

Hilary reddened and said with difficulty, "What else could I say?"

Thomas had to be content with that.

As the dead-line drew near, my heart began to beat uncomfortably. Between six o'clock and dinner is always an awkward time: tea is a thing of the past, drinks are still some way off. Remembering my cue I said, "What shall we do now?"

To my astonishment Thomas answered, "Isn't it rather nice sitting here?"

Was he really going to rat on me?

"Very nice," I said, "but oughtn't we to do something—something for Hilary to write home about?"

"We've written home," said Julia, and Hilary stretched her hands towards the newly lit fire.

"You see," said Thomas, "she wants to sit among the cinders, warming her pretty little toes, and I should like to sit with her."

"I have another plan for her," I said.

"Drop it, Fergus. Forget it."

I trained an Ancient Mariner's eye on him.

"All day," I said, "you've been asking Hilary questions which, if I'm not mistaken, she hasn't always wanted to answer." I paused to let this sink in. Thomas's face remained expressionless, Julia nodded in approval, Hilary looked as if she wished I hadn't spoken. "If I carry out my plan," I went on, with all the impressiveness I could muster, "Hilary may feel more inclined to answer questions, or Thomas less inclined to ask them."

"What do you propose then?" asked Thomas, disingenuously, for he well knew.

I saw that he was weakening.

"Just to go for a walk."

"Go by all means," said Thomas, "but I shan't go with you. I shall stay behind and write letters, like Hilary. Remember, I went to church."

"If we go for a walk we must change our shoes," said Julia.

"Need you change yours, Hilary?" Thomas teased her. She gave him a half pleading look and got up to go.

"Let's meet in the hall," I said. "Mind, no shirking."

The evening was warm with a slight mist rising from the grass.

"Which way?" asked Julia.

"Round by the silo. I'll show you. I'll go first." I spoke with authority, as one who leads an expedition.

Julia automatically fell in behind me, and Hilary as automatically brought up the rear, and we were moving off when Hilary said, suddenly, "Need we walk in single file?"

"Only for a minute, until we get our bearings," and I headed for the far side of the pampas clump, the side away from the house. Reaching it I slowed down, and the little procession, like a cortège, well spaced out, trailed past the clump at a snail's pace.

We went on in this formation for a minute or two, and then Hilary called out: "Can't we join up now? It's lonely being the cow's tail."

"Of course," I said, and stopped. As we were regrouping ourselves, Julia said to Hilary, "Why, darling, we're looking quite pale—I mean you are. Is anything the matter?"

"I'm all right now," said Hilary, breathing rather fast. "Just for a moment something seemed to come over me—a sort of goose-flesh—you seemed so far away, I couldn't reach you! I'm all right now," she repeated.

"A touch of agoraphobia, perhaps," I said. "Let's go arm in arm." I linked their arms in mine, and so we proceeded until our stumbles brought to an end this always risky method of progression.

When we had disengaged ourselves I pointed to the silo on the hill. "There's our objective.

"What, that blot on the landscape?" Julia cried. "Why did you choose it for our *but de promenade*?"

"It looks prettier as you get nearer."

"Oh nonsense! You must be a surrealist."

"What do you think, Hilary?" For even I felt impelled to try to drag an opinion out of her.

She answered with unexpected vehemence: "I hate it—it looks so sinister—it's so black and thick and frightening. Let's go another way!"

I suggested the village. "But," I warned them, "we shall lose altitude, we shall have to *climb* back."

"Oh, Fergus!" cried Julia, "what a slave-driver you are! Isn't he, Hilary?"

She didn't answer. I pleaded the need of exercise, for me and them; but I didn't explain, as we tramped through

the village, and beyond it, that I felt an unaccountable reluctance to go back to the house. What effect would the experiment have had on Thomas? None, I felt sure, but even a negative result would be disappointing. So nearly an hour had passed, and it was growing dark, when weary and footsore (as Julia complained that she and Hilary were) we trudged up the slope to Hill House.

"What's that?"

We were approaching the house from the village, not the garden, side and there was a sort of glare behind it, that outlined the steep roof against the sky and couldn't have been an effect of the sunset, for it waxed and waned.

"What's that?" repeated Julia. "Is the house on fire?"

"Or a chimney?" said Hilary, for once offering a suggestion. "The sparks might be—" she stopped.

Sparks there certainly were, but they didn't come out of a chimney-pot; they were being whirled about the sky like fireflies.

"Take your time," I said. "I'll hurry on."

The pungent smell of burning met me in the hall. "Thomas!" I called, "Thomas!" and getting no answer went straight into the library. Here the smell was stronger and the glare fiercer; it lit up the room, lit it up so brightly that I saw at once on the round leather-covered table an envelope with my name scrawled on it. I tore it open.

"Dear Fergus," I read,

"I saw two figures quite distinctly, yours and Julia's, but not a third, and I'm driven to think that Hilary doesn't exist—at least for me. I only exist for her—so why go on? I don't blame you for wanting me to make sure—I am sure now. You'll find me like Polly Flinders.

Love, Thomas."

I ran to the window, where the glare came from, but it was not so much the glare that filled my eyes as the huge gap, black, and ominous, like a cauldron hung over a furnace, where the pampas clump had been. Beneath it the flames still ran and leapt and spurted on their glowing bed of ashes. Outside the French window I felt their scorching breath upon my face and was soon beaten back. It was not until later, a good deal later, that I and one or two others found the charred remains and, near by, the twisted shard of the burst pistol which was still too hot to touch.



PEYTON M



What it's really like

—and, honestly, it isn't a bit like those snow-and-robin cards any more, is it?



God rest ye merry, gentlemen, apart from being a dated way of putting it, is a dated sentiment too. For the contemporary caroller is no chorister. He is usually a juvenile—often too young even to be delinquent—and he brings a simple bob-a-job approach to his singing, except that he's not too strong on the job part. To him, music is mainly in the sound of the coins he expects you to hand over when he presses the bell after two tentative bars (flat).



IT MIGHT SEEM THAT CHRISTMAS IS THE ONE PERMANENT THING IN OUR Space Age lives—but is it? Like every other tradition, it is changing all the time, though so slowly that many never notice. Some people still think of Christmas as Dickens described it, but it isn't like that even in Dickens's day. It has long stopped being an occasion of snow-capped trees, yule logs, carolling parties, and jolly banquets. There is hardly ever any snow, and it makes headlines when there is. You can't get a yule log, and even if you burn some of the little lumps of wood that nowadays pass as logs you probably risk prosecution under the smokeless-zone regulations. About the only carolling you will hear is done for strictly commercial motives, usually by urchins. And any banquets are given by business men for other business men, and charged to expenses. . . . The character of Christmas in 1959 is more accurately conveyed by some of the drawings on these pages. It is a time of sustained shopping (starting earlier every year but never finished before Christmas Eve), of marathon televiewing, of more and more cards exchanged with slighter and slighter acquaintances, of fewer and fewer pantomimes, and of more and more parties with less and less to eat at them. It's changed and it will go on changing—and it will probably still add up to a lot of fun.

Gaiety? Of course there is plenty of it. Christmas time is the season of parties, especially for children. But there is a good deal more gloomy staying at home too, and it is hard to escape the feeling that the scene of jollity opposite is less typical than the solemn family huddle on the left. The telly has infiltrated Christmas—and the programmes, especially the Royal broadcast, even determine the day's schedule in many homes.

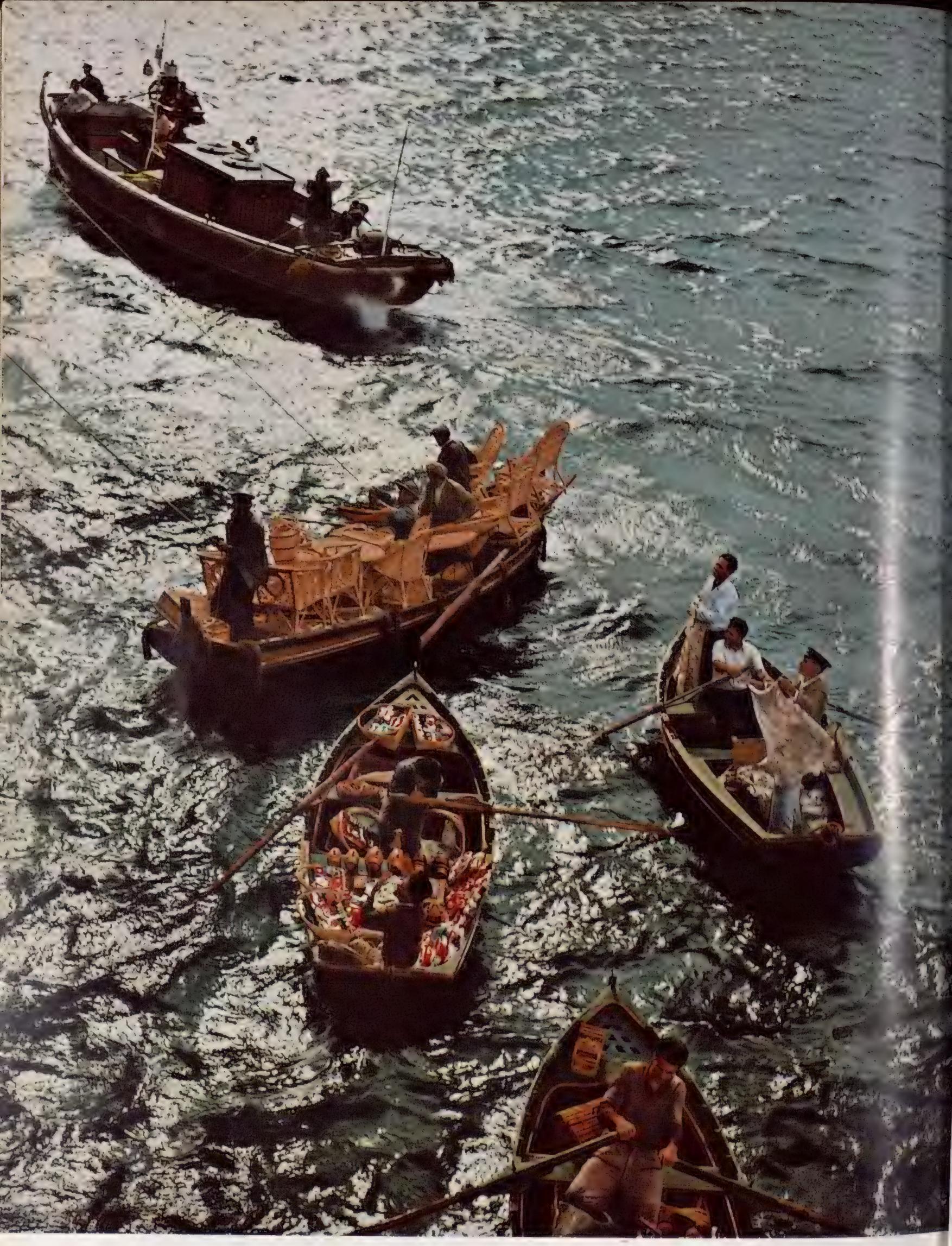


When father sits down to his Christmas dinner, his family should not expect too much of a show of delight as he contemplates the fare. For he has probably had two or three Christmas dinners already. His companions on those occasions will have been other executives and his hosts were probably his best customers (eager to humour him) or his biggest suppliers (hoping to put him under an obligation). The Businessmen's Christmas Banquet is now an established feature of the commercial scene—but father need not be envied. He most likely had a gruelling time, with umpteen courses, the boar's head carried in amid fanfares, carols in which he was required to join, an inferior cabaret he was bound to clap, and paper hats he was compelled to wear with an expansive show of sportsmanship

DRAWINGS BY MARDIE MADDEN



For parents of young children a visit to see Santa Claus in a leading store is inescapable, and tots now grow up taking for granted the wonder man in the flesh. The parent soon learns to steel herself (it's usually a she) to standing in the queue that leads to his presence, having the money snatched from her when she buys the ticket that permits an audience, and calming the tears that follow when the plastic toy Santa dispenses breaks on the way home. With older children a hazard is answering the question: Why doesn't Father Christmas look like he did last week at Darker's?



I wouldn't dream of spending it in England . . . !

by DOONE BEAL

THE smog which blanketed London last Christmas set me planning there and then to spend Christmas this year anywhere else in the world but at home. Basically, there are three getaway alternatives: the Alpine, the tropical, and somewhere bathed in sunshine half-way between—for instance, Madeira, where much is made of Christmas and, incidentally, even more of New Year's Eve. For fugitives from mince pies and plum puddings, and in-laws, all three have equal appeal.

Alighting in the sunny balm of a Venetian afternoon last January, and then taking B.E.A.'s bus up to the sparkling heights of Cortina (only a six-hour journey in all, from London Airport), I made a mental note at the time that this would do as well as any.

Cortina was the venue of the Winter Olympics in 1956, so I am casting no aspersions on the quality of the ski-ing when I say that part of its appeal is the fact that you do not have to ski well, or indeed at all, in order to enjoy it. It is blessedly unhearty (could the Italians ever be hearty?)—an elegant, festive little Dolomite town, well laced with cafés, restaurants and bars; excellent hotels, with Italian décor at its contemporary best; and superb shops—which is just as well, because the sartorial standard is extremely high. The sight of the Italian women, dressed from anorak to boots in a single colour (last season, mimosa and brilliant violet predominated), sends one, with a rush of blood to the head, into one of the many shops where ski pants can be made to measure, in a dazzling array of colours, and matched up to accessories. The cost is around £10, and it can be done, with persuasion, in 36 hours. My tip is to buy on the spot.

But back to the serious matter of actual ski-ing. There are 14 cable-cars, chair-lifts and ski-lifts to transport you to the top of the best of the downhill runs. Poccol, an appendix resort of Cortina's, also has good slopes, nursery and otherwise, together with tobogganing and horse-drawn sleighs. There are a couple of hotels in which to lunch or stay, which are also lively at night. In Cortina itself is the Olympic ice stadium, and there is excellent ice hockey during the season.

Whether or not one spends the day on the slopes, there is no lack of places in which to spend the night club hours: for example Toula, with log cabin and bear-skin décor; Sanin da Po (slang for "see you later") with cabaret and dancing, in the basement of the Ampezzo Hotel; or Crystallino. Hub of the town is the bar of the Hotel de la Poste, both at noon and

Traders arriving at Madeira are greeted by a swarm of little boats selling the island's hand-made wines. Here the fading sun makes a striking pattern of their transactions
Foto: GORDON WILKINS



Cortina, in the Italian Dolomites, has a combination of sun, snow and exhilarating mountain air, plus a gay night life

pre-dinner. This hotel has one of the best restaurants and would be my choice, with the equally attractive alternative of the Hotel Aneora.

On the outskirts of the town is the large, *de luxe* Miramonti, with its own night club, a large children's dining- and play-room, and a curling rink—making it a good base for a family of disparate age groups. Whichever hotel you choose (and there are 47 of them, of varying types), it seems sensible to take advantage of the all-inclusive deal which is offered by leading travel agents in association with B.E.A. Two-week holidays cost from £61 to £86, including the return air fare from Venice. Lose no time in booking if you intend to spend Christmas in Cortina—24 December to 6 January is high season, and it is a great favourite with Italians from Rome and Milan.

At the opposite extreme of climate, I have never enjoyed a Christmas more than one I spent, a couple of years ago, in Martinique, an island of the French West Indies.

Its festivities were a far cry indeed from the animated toys, theatrical trappings and general commercial hysteria of any metropolitan Christmas. It is odd that, underneath that burning blue sky, it should also have seemed more Christmassy.

continued overleaf



Roof-top view of Fort-de-France. For a beach view of Martinique, see the cover

I wouldn't dream
of spending it
in England

continued

A people who have never seen snow decorate their shop windows with myriad blobs of cotton wool, fixed in a static snowstorm to the glass. Dark, scarlet-robed children sing French carols in touchingly uncertain chorus. I remember standing outside the overflowing cathedral among a brow-mopping crowd in the heat, during midnight Mass; attending a Christmas Eve party where no less than 36 children stemmed from one family; listening to Christmas music, merging with the sound of drums, from a hilltop restaurant; and swimming, in a 77 degree blue sea, on Christmas Day.

Martinique is not to be considered in the image of Nassau or Jamaica; from these islands, it is different in almost every respect. First of all, it is resoundingly French—as is evident immediately upon arrival at the airport, scented with a heady mixture of garlic and Gauloise. A happier association of Europeans and Africans has been achieved than in some islands, with the result that one can indulge the Gallic pleasure of sitting in a pavement café over a glass of white rum, rather than be confined to tall drinks and small talk in a conventional hotel bar. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the French have managed to preserve their cuisine—even going to the length of cultivating oysters in the bilges of the boats which ply between Martinique and Le Havre. And only to this island and its neighbour, Guadeloupe, are French cheeses and wines regularly imported and consistently drunk. Some of the best food, including some delicious *friture*, is to be had at the bistro Chez Etienne, but one dines extremely well at either of the two chief hotels, the Lido—a luxury hotel some 10 miles outside Fort-de-France—or the Imperatrice, a lively, urban little hotel facing the city savannah where the white statue of the Empress Josephine sublimely contemplates her birthplace.

On the debit side, the island does not have the white coral sand typical of many of its neighbours; the sea is as blue and clear as any, but much of the sand is volcanic black. One must go all the way to Diamond Beach or Ste. Anne, the other side of the island, to get away from it. For this you need a car—as indeed properly to explore the rest of a fascinating terrain. Gauguin lived and painted in Martinique for years, and the landscape varies from the deepest and most claustrophobic of tropical jungle, through fishing villages with straw huts strung out along the shore, to stark, scrub-covered mountains. In a mere two-hour drive one sees examples of it all.

Something else to see is the grass-grown ruins of the city of St. Pierre, the erstwhile capital, which was

destroyed by the eruption of Mont Pelée in 1902, leaving as sole survivor a prisoner, sentenced to death, who languished in one of the dungeons. In the museum nearby one of the most telling and horrific exhibits is a collection of watches, all of which had stopped at eight o'clock. This incident is not unfamiliar to people who remember Patrick Leigh Fermor's novel, *The Violins Of St. Jacques*.

Martinique has a character perhaps too specially flavoured to be of universal appeal (although this only increases its potency for the addicts). It is no millionaire's holiday camp. But if you like tropical sunshine, rewardingly exploratory countryside, French people and French food, and a far from unsophisticated little town in which to drink and shop (French perfumes for Christmas presents at lower prices than those in Paris)—then I strongly recommend it. B.O.A.C.'s flight gives you the opportunity to island-hop via Bermuda and Barbados. Air France fly direct, via Paris. Both fares are £259 3s., tourist return, £332 3s., first class.

Alas, I have not yet visited Madeira. But the leisured, pre-war little island of flowers and bullock carts, laces and sugar-cane is high on my list of places I must visit. The immense firework display on New Year's Eve; 65 degrees' worth of hot December sunshine, and the fact that one can swim on Christmas Day—these seem reason enough to make it one of the most popular of all Christmas holiday venues.

But there is more to Madeira than sipping gin fizz by the swimming pool (always, somehow, a vision in my mind). People who know and love the island emphasize what a pity it is not to see some of the interior—the wild mountain passes of Ribeiro Frio and Terreiro da Luta, for example (you can hire a self-drive car and the roads are goodish, by island standards). Equally, the local tourist office has available a launch with deep-sea fishing equipment which can be taken by the day, complete with crew. Or one can travel on one of the local steamers which ply the south-coast ports of Calheta, Ponta Sol, Ribeira Brava and Camara de Lobos. At Machico, on the east coast, is one of the few accessible bathing beaches, and there is also, here, a clean, simple little hotel, the Hotel de Machico, where full pension costs only £1 a day. In Funchal itself there is the famous Reid's and an alternative is the Savoy—which is, I am told, as gay and less formal (also cheaper; top prices are 52s. 6d. a day, full pension). Or there is the Nova Avenida, which was built just before the war. At Reid's, part payment can be made in sterling if arrangements so to do are completed before leaving England.

One can take in Madeira as part of a cruise which includes also Casablanca and Teneriffe (Greek Lines), or travel there direct from the U.K. by either Greek Lines (every 13 days, the first outward sailing and also the Christmas cruise leaving Southampton on 19 December); by Bergen lines (every 10 days), or Union Castle (every other Thursday). Another method at roughly the same cost is to fly to Lisbon, and then take one of the frequent Italian or Portuguese steamers for the 28-hour trip onwards. Cost of this part of the journey is £25 first-class return but on the new ships of either Nacional or Colonial Lines I gather that even third class (at only £12 return) is adequate.

A last incidental: much is said of the famous Madeira wine but I am told that one of the best buys, and basis of some of the nicest drinks, is the superb locally distilled white rum.

CIRCUS!

Communist Russia, which calls most Western amusements decadent, officially smiles on the ring and the trapeze. . . .

The State Circus of Moscow is probably the most ambitious assembly of talent in the sawdust business

SPECIALLY PHOTOGRAPHED AT WEMBLEY BY ALAN VINES



CIRCUS!

continued



ON THE COVER (and page 21) the Koch Sisters balance heart-stoppingly on a giant moving "semaphore." They are on wires but use no safety net. Clara, the eldest, is an examiner at the unique Circus School in Moscow and a committee member of the Soviet equivalent of Britain's Arts Council



Opposite: It's a Russian custom for the artistes to return the compliment when the audience applauds—a feature, too, of the grand parades which open and round-off every performance

Right: Clowns Mozel and Savitch wear no white-face make-up, are true mimes. Straight man Savitch (balancing bucket) joined forces with partner Mozel eight years ago. Their routine here is ancient and international, the bucket contains not water but paper shavings



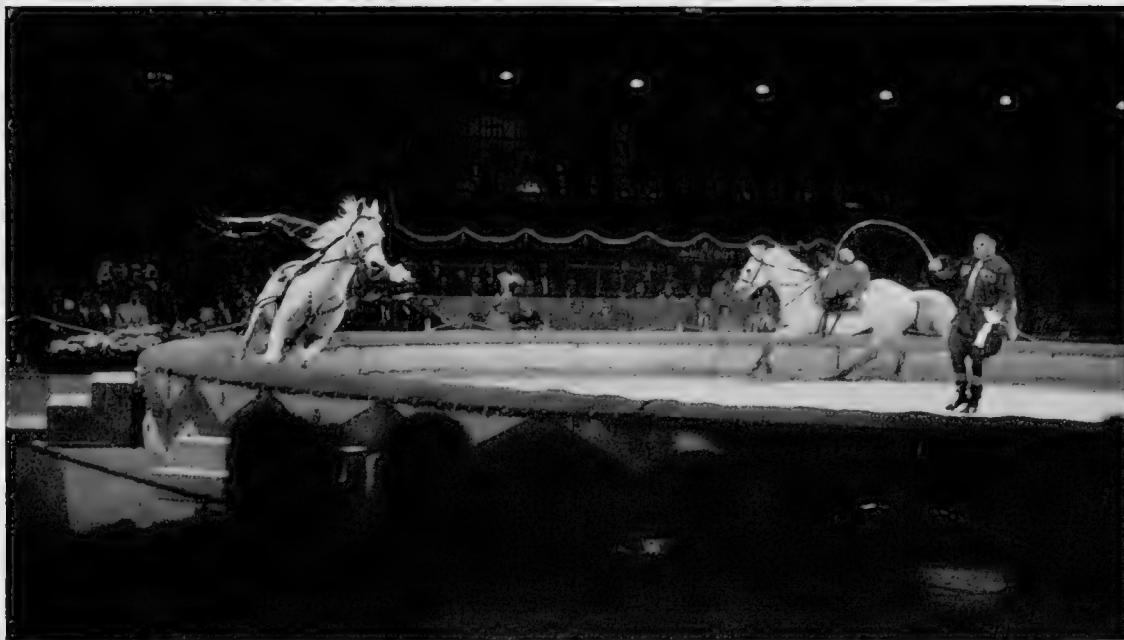
Souvenir of his days as a Moscow Opera star, tenor-voiced Nikolai Olhovikov (above & left) sings arias while juggling on horseback. Olhovikov, son of circus performers, left the ring in early life to study at Russia's Academy of Music, returned after his marriage to wire ballerina Nina Logatchova (see page 25)

Revolving perch, high in the roof, supports the whirling figures (right) of Lydia Levandovsky and husband Boris, a former Wall of Death rider. They circle at 30 m.p.h. Lydia joined the circus 20 years ago as second choice to the Bolshoi after journeying from Tomsk to Moscow and arriving too late for the Ballet entrance examinations

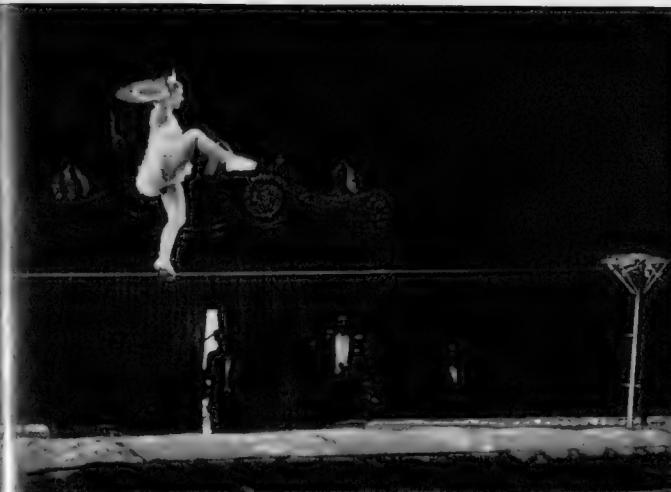
CIRCUS! *continued*



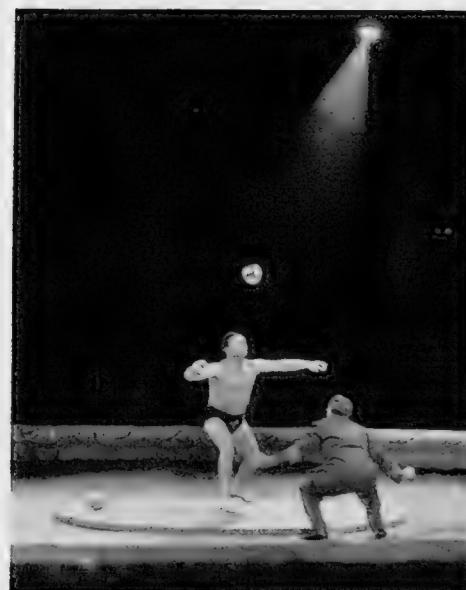
Illusionist Emil Kio hurls a pack of cards at a foil. Miraculously five only are impaled in the order selected by members of the audience. Kio, a former acrobat, works in the open ring, disdains distracting patter, can make a man disappear or transform a caged lion into a glamorous showgirl. Kio uses forty assistants but all eyes are on the maestro, watching but never quite seeing, how he does it



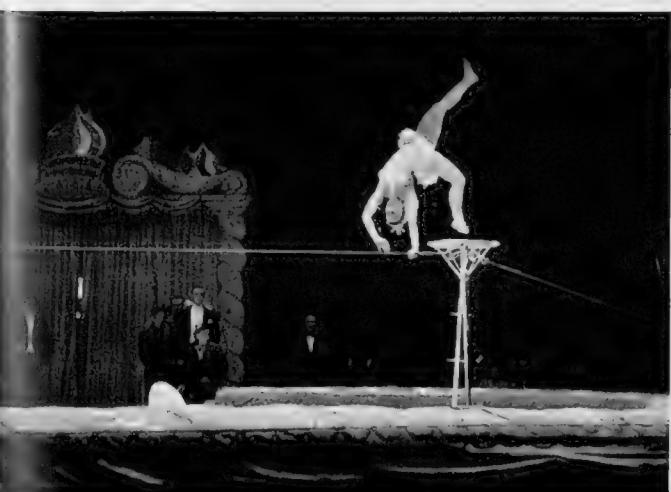
Caucasian Cossacks from North Aseti, the Djigits, led by veteran World War One cavalryman Mihail Touganow (with whip) are gymnasts as much as horsemen. Touganow picked the riders from his home district, lives only for the troupe



Wire ballerina Nina Logatchova (*pictures left*) is of the new generation of scientifically trained Russian circus artistes. She studied ballet at the centre attached to her secondary school in Moscow, later specialized in wire dancing at the Circus School, and now holds a gold medal as best in her profession



Strong man Vladimir Hertz catches cannon balls on the nape of his neck, juggles with heavy weights, claims his feats are owed to strict diet, careful living. Hertz, 30 years with circuses, was once Bessarabian amateur wrestling champion



CONTEMPORARY

CAROLS by Francis Kinsman



*God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay!
For in a hundred-thousand homes
'Tis decoration day....*



*The Holly and the Ivy
Are finally in place.
How proudly I survey them,
Relief upon my face.*



*I shake with righteous anger,
Venom in every vein.
The Holly and the Ivy
Have fallen down again.*

*I saw Three Ships come sailing in
On a Christmas card this morning.
'Twas signed "from John and
Carolyn,"
And postmarked "Auchnafragh."*



*We hid it on the highest shelf,
The Christmas card with sailing
ships,
Keeping its secret to itself.
I wonder who they are?*

*Ding, dong, merrily on high
The paper bells are swinging!
Ding, dong, merrily am I
To top of ladder clinging!
Yes, I can reach, but only just . . .
The chandelier has bit the dust.*



*Now the crimson sun has set,
Now the world in silence sleeps,
Now with perspiration wet,
We relax in little heaps.
All the house is decked in green,
Utter chaos it has been!
Trite, commercialized, and yet
Christmas still its magic keeps.*

To fill in the idle hours that occur in even the best-regulated Christmases The Tatler offers

SLEIGH RIDE

a new game designed to appeal to the acquisitive instincts of the season. No skill at all is needed—just a pair of dice. Only four people can play—but who ever heard of a party where more than four people actually *wanted* to play a dice game? The others can get on with their drinks, or watching TV. Come to that, this is the sort of game that can be played *at the same time* as watching TV. The rules are on page 32, and before play can start there is also a little matter of cutting out some bits and pieces on this page and elsewhere, as described overleaf. . . .



BEFORE YOU START CUTTING OUT . . .

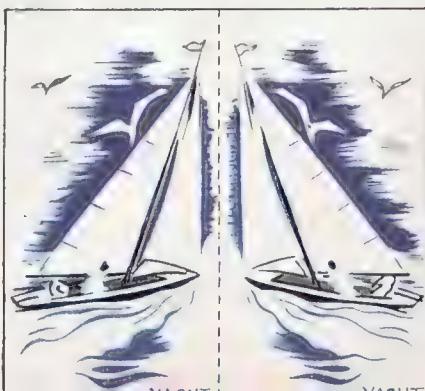
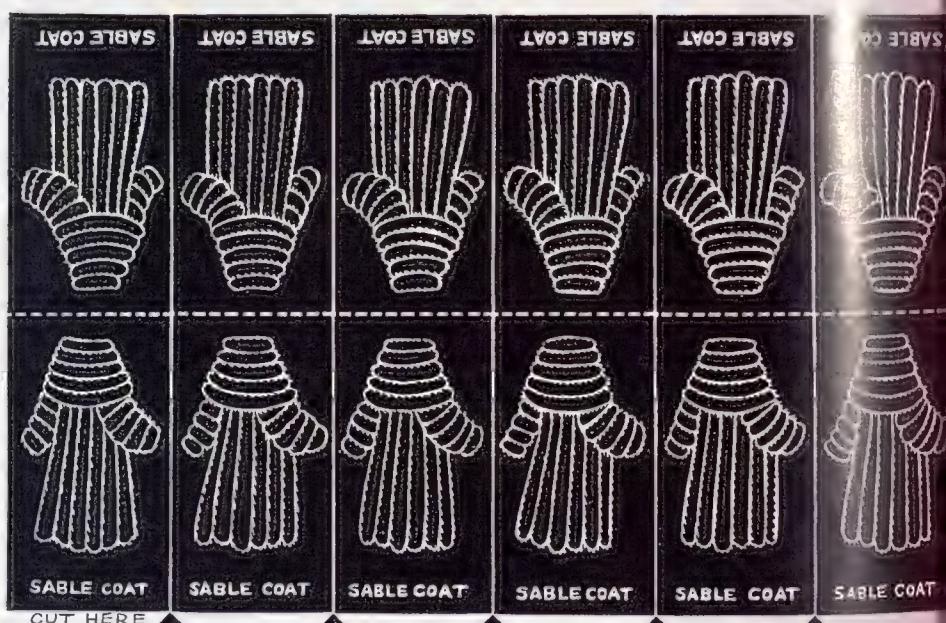
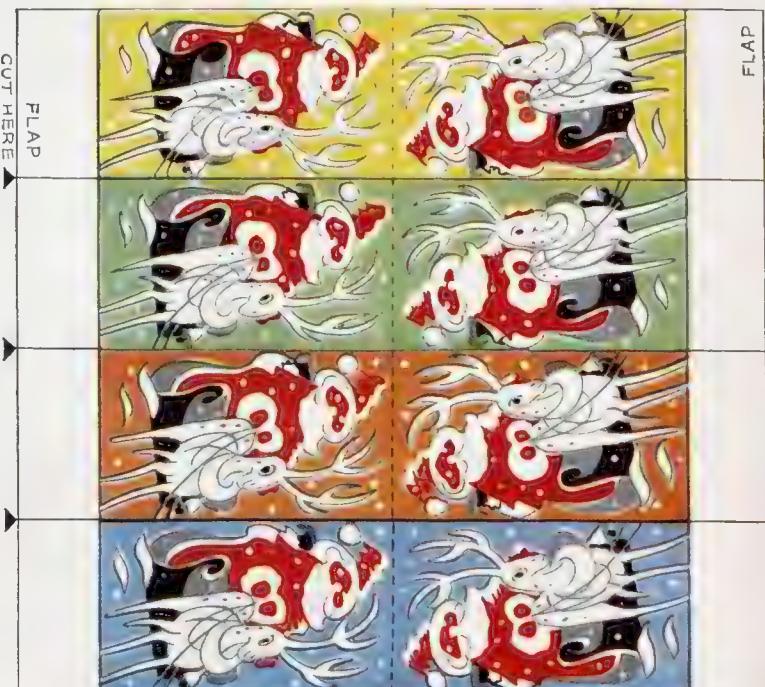
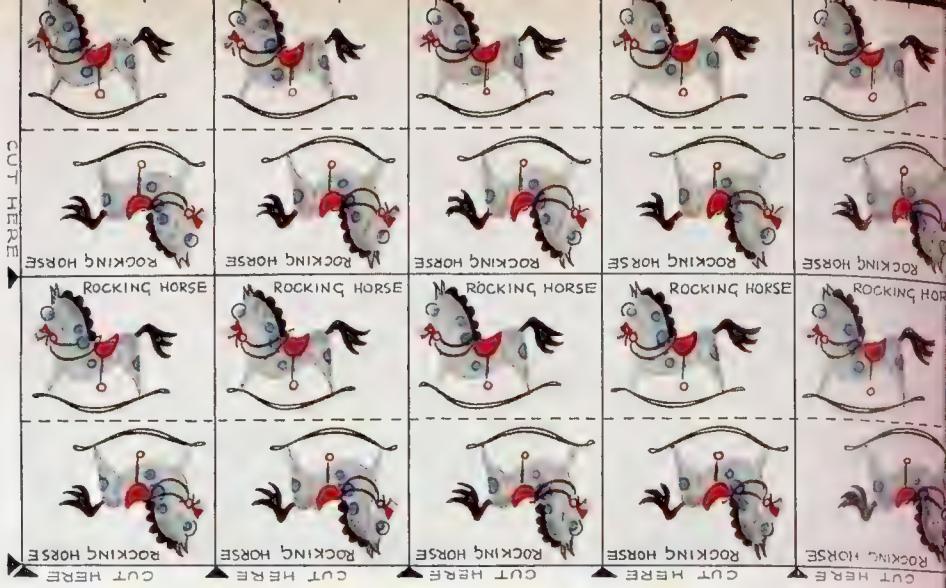
You need:

1. Scissors
2. Adhesive (preferably rubber-type, which does not crinkle the paper)
3. A spare half-hour or . . .
4. An unemployed teenager to do the job for you.

Step One: Open the Christmas Number in the middle and prise open the staples with a nail file, penknife, &c. Pull out the two middle pages. These constitute the playing-board. They can, if you like, be pasted to a piece of cardboard (but be sure not to do this until you have digested the instructions on the back; otherwise you will have to buy another copy of the Christmas Number to find out the rules!)

Step Two: Cut out pages 27 and 28 down the spine (*i.e.* where the magazine folds). Cut out the cards, Father Christmases, and gifts along the solid lines indicated. These cards, &c., are all double-sided; fold them along the dotted lines and paste the backs to the fronts. The Father Christmases have additional flaps, which should be folded outwards to form the base on which they stand upright.

Step Three: Turn to page 54 and repeat the cutting-out process of Step Two.

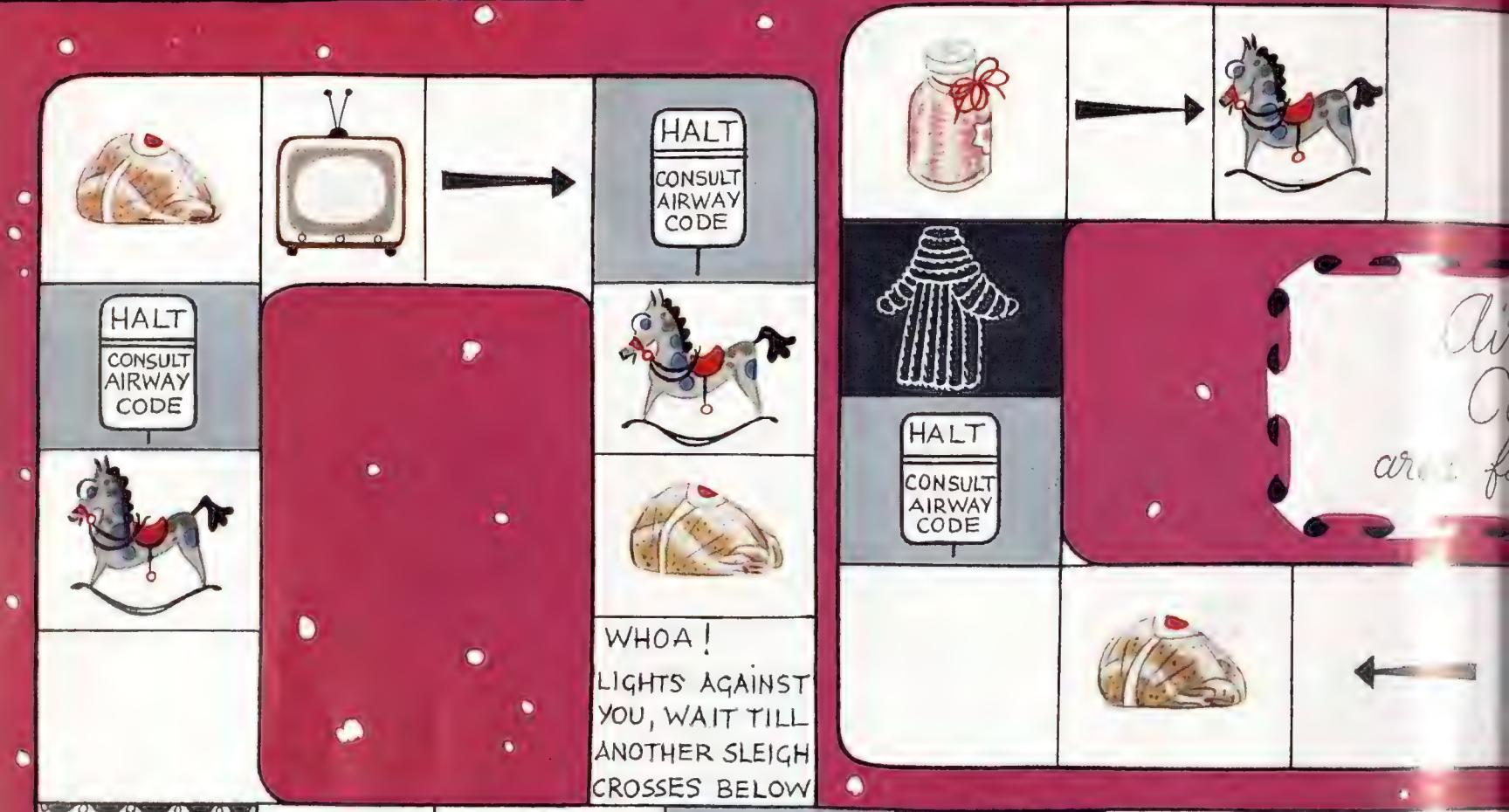


SLEIGH RIDE

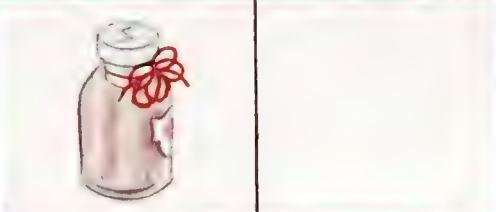
A new Christmas game presented
by The Tatler

Designed by ELIZABETH WALL

Devised for The Tatler by
Shirley Lowe and Mary Macpherson



SLEIGH RIDE



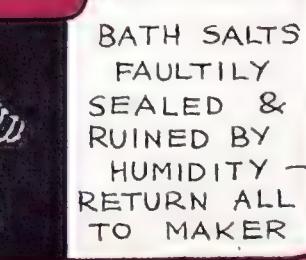
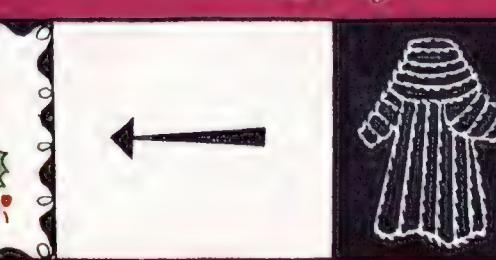
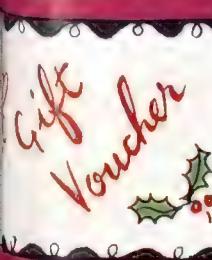
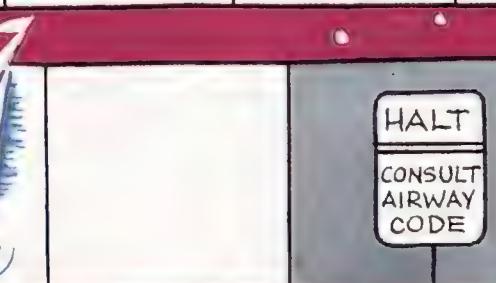
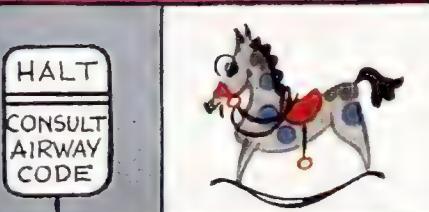
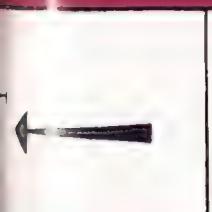
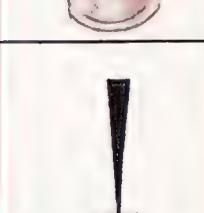
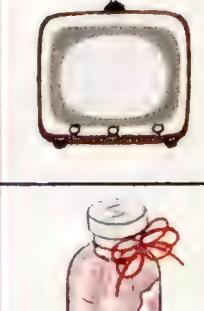
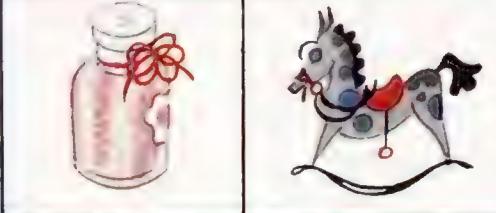
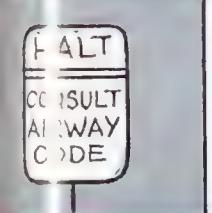
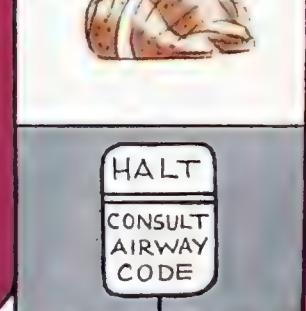
POFF HERE,
E
IN TO
T YOUR
NISTMAS
RDS



WHOA!
LIGHTS ARE
AGAINST YOU-
WAIT TILL
YOU THROW
A DOUBLE



JUMPED
THE LIGHT
— GO BACK
WHERE
YOU WERE



Gift
Voucher



BATH SALTS
FAULTILY
SEALED &
RUINED BY
HUMIDITY —
RETURN ALL
TO MAKER

How to play SLEIGH RIDE

1.

Sleigh Ride is a dice game for four players—ages immaterial provided they aren't proud.

2.

The cards labelled Airway Code should be stacked, instructions facing downwards, on the Airway Code area of the playing-board. The gift cards should be assembled anywhere convenient in sight of all the players (yes, somebody might cheat).

3.

Each player chooses a Father Christmas and puts him on Polar Base, the game's starting-point. Each player also becomes the owner of the rooftop coloured the same shade on the board as his Father Christmas.

4.

The first player to throw a double starts the game, moving his Father Christmas along the Sleigh Ride the number of places thrown. When the end of the ride is reached, Father Christmas returns to Polar Base and starts the ride again.

5.

If a player's Father Christmas lands on a gift (e.g. bottle of bath salts, prepacked turkey, rocking horse, portable TV, sable coat, or yacht) the player collects a card showing the same gift. These cards should be accumulated in the player's rooftop. If a Father Christmas lands on a gift and no cards corresponding to that

gift are left, bad luck! He doesn't collect anything.

6.

The winner of the game shall be the first player to acquire a yacht—but no player can accept a yacht unless his or her rooftop already musters (1) a bottle of bath salts, (2) a prepacked turkey, (3) a rocking horse, (4) a portable TV, and (5) a sable coat.

7.

A player must obey the instructions given on any square on which his Father Christmas may land. If the instructions refer him to the Airway Code the player must take the top card of the Airway Code pack and obey the instructions printed on it. The card is then replaced at the bottom of the pack.

8.

A player whose Father Christmas lands on a Gift Voucher may collect any gift wanted—except a yacht. The Gift Voucher facility must be used at once and cannot be saved for a later turn.

9.

A player throwing a double (i.e. two dice showing the same number) takes an extra turn.

10.

By agreement players can vary the rules to make the game harder, easier, or longer—or to get the whole thing over in time to muscle in on somebody else's fascinating conversation.



A Christmas Compendium



Eight pages of solutions to
some of the problems
of the season

FOOD Page 35 Bake one pie and feed a party of 20.
Helen Burke gives the resounding recipe

WINE Page 37 No-nonsense suggestions for what to serve
with the dinner, and how to buy
wine as a present, by Pamela Vandyke Price

HIRING Page 38 Where to hire everything from caterers
who'll lay on your party to conjurers
who'll amuse the children

PARTY GAMES Page 39 Margaret Mossop has some suggestions
that may be new to you

LETTER WRITING Page 40 Mary Macpherson has devised a system that
guarantees to provide a suitable
thank-you letter for any gift you'll ever receive



How to feed a party with a single pie



Photograph: Van Hallan. Table appointments: Heal's of Tottenham Court Road

THE PIE AND (OPPOSITE) WHAT GOES INTO IT

You need:

- 1 turkey (9 lb.)
- 1 young goose (7 lb.)*
- 1 capon (6 lb.)
- 1 fully-grown young hare*
- 2 partridges*
- 1 large knuckle of veal
- 1½ lb. thinly-sliced rindless streaky bacon
- A 3-in. square of boiled ham
- ½ lb. mushrooms

½ lb. butter

3 oz. pistachio nuts

Madeira or sherry

Brandy

Seasoning

Bouquet garni

Water

* "Stand-ins" are permissible—a large duck for a goose, a tame rabbit for a hare, and wood pigeons instead of partridges.

HELEN BURKE

*trims an open-handed 18th-century recipe
into a novel dish big enough for 20 people*

THIS DRAMATIC 18TH-CENTURY PIE, FILLED WITH poultry and game, including turkey, capon, goose, partridge and hare, weighed 19 lb. when cooked and is enough to feed 20 people. You could give a small party and provide no other food. Or, if you want a variety of food, you could make it the centrepiece of the refreshments for up to 40. The recipe comes from the 1796 edition of *The Art of Cookery*, by Mrs. Hannah Glass, and she calls it a "Yorkshire Christmas Pie." It contains foods that might appear singly on a buffet, and I have adapted the ingredients to suit 1959 realities.

Of course it's a challenging undertaking. You may need a man's help because there is a fair amount of heavy work to be done, and, to complete the pie, the process will carry over two days. This TATLER Christmas Pie is round instead of oval, because these days there must be few domestic ovens that could accommodate a 19-lb. pie of elongated shape. An alternative, of course, is to prepare the pie, take it to a local baker and let him do the cooking. Some bakers, in business in a small enough way, would probably be happy to help.

One advantage: As this pie should be cooked and ready at least 48 hours before being cut, there is no last-hour cooking of the main course to be done on the party day.

THE METAL BAND

In the old days pie dishes big enough for this were easy to come by, but nowadays you will have to improvise. The baking sheet as supplied with any standard-sized cooker will be large enough for the bottom of the pie. But it would be difficult, if not impossible, to buy easily a 12-inch round hinged pie mould. Fortunately a local metal shop will supply a five-inch deep band of aluminium sheeting or tin-coated steel and rivet it to provide a mould 12 inches in diameter. Or a handy husband could easily do it.

The pie's contents are listed opposite in their right order of assemblage, the weight of the turkey, capon and goose being that of the undrawn birds.

The birds and the hare will have to be boned. The poultier will do it, but he would be much happier if he

were asked to do the job on a quiet day, rather than at a busy week-end. It is a finicky job, to say the least. Once you have brought home all the fillings for the pie, it is a simple matter to get on with the job of making it.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Both light and dark forcemeat and aspic are required to fill the "gaps" in the pie and they should be prepared on the first day. In boning the turkey, the poultier will have left the skin intact. The goose and capon will have been both skinned and boned. The breasts of the skinned partridges will have been removed and the back meat of the hare will have been cut into two long pieces. All the bones and giblets will be included with the birds.

For the **white forcemeat** and **aspic**: As soon as they arrive, place the turkey and capon bones in a pan with the knuckle of veal, an onion, a *bouquet garni*, freshly milled pepper and a little salt (bearing in mind that the bacon will contribute some salt flavour). Cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently until all the meat can be removed from the bones easily.

Save the stock, of course, and pass the well-drained meat through a fine mincer. Add a little softened butter and a good pinch or two of ground mace and pound the mixture with a heavy wooden spoon.

For the **dark forcemeat**: Proceed in the same way with the bones of the goose, hare and partridges, the heart, liver and legs of the hare and the partridge livers, gizzards, too—but do not include the turkey, goose and capon livers. When the meat falls easily from the bones, remove it and mince it finely with the giblets. Add a little softened butter, a pinch of mace and, if necessary, a little pepper and salt.

THE LIVERS

Simmer the turkey, goose and capon livers in a little butter to stiffen them. Set them aside, ready to be used.

THE MARINADE

Cut each of the long fillets of hare across into four pieces.

continued overleaf





continued from page 35

Halve each of the four boned breasts of partridge lengthwise. Place the pieces (16 in. all) in a small basin. Pour two tablespoons each of Madeira (or sherry) and brandy over them; cover and leave until next day.

OTHER FIRST-DAY JOBS

Gently simmer the mushrooms in a little butter in a covered pan until they are dark but still soft. Set them aside until required. Pour boiling water over the pistachio nuts so that the skins will come off easily. Drain and skin the nuts.

THE PASTRY (SECOND DAY'S JOB)

For what is known as "raised pastry," the following ingredients are required:

2 pints (scant) cold water	7 lb. plain flour
5 lb. lard	2½ oz. salt

Slowly bring the water and lard to the boil, by which time the fat should have dissolved. Have the flour and salt sifted together in a large bowl. Stir the hot liquid into them. Mix well, leave to become cold, then knead into a pliable paste. Cover and proceed with the building-up of the pie's contents.

THE FILLING

Place the three-inch cube of ham on a table and surround it with dark forcemeat, $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick. This means that after the top, sides and ends have been covered, the cube will have to be inverted so that the bottom (now the top!) can be coated, too. Dot each of the sides and ends with nine skinned pistachio nuts and gently press the quartered livers into the forcemeat on all sides.

Repeat the operation of covering the already coated cube, this time using the white forcemeat. Place the halved breasts of partridge on the top, bottom, sides and ends. Hang a strip of hare over each corner. Invert the gradually growing block and place a strip of hare on each corner in the same way.

Place the skinned boned capon on a board, breast downwards. Cut the legs open and spread them as well. Layer the capon with thinly sliced bacon and sprinkle it with freshly milled pepper. Carefully place the above "cube" on to the centre of the capon and sprinkle the marinading liquor over it. Bring the capon up and over it and wrap it well and as firmly as possible into a round shape and turn it over with the joins underneath.

Now lay the turkey, skin side down, with the boned legs spread open. Layer it with further thinly sliced bacon and dot it all over, here and there, with about 4 oz. butter and the

mushrooms. Scatter the remaining pistachio nuts over the surface and sprinkle with a little more Madeira or sherry and brandy.

Place the boned goose—its legs, too, spread open—on the turkey, then place the "ball" of capon on the goose. Draw the turkey and goose up and over to encase the lot, shaping it into a round.

Arrange four pieces of string, criss-crosswise. Place the large "packet" on them and bring them up and over it. Lightly but firmly tie them together so that the whole lot looks like a large round melon encased in string.

Place the greased metal band on the greased baking sheet. Line them with two-thirds of the pastry, rolled out to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick. As it will not be easy to fit the poultry "parcel" right to the bottom sides of the ring, fill in the space with further forcemeat and any left-over bacon, then gently ease the turkey "parcel" into the "mould." Cut the strings, carefully pull them out and press the filling into position, gently pressing the top to level it. Fill in any gaps with forcemeat.

Roll out the remaining pastry to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick. Place it on the wetted edges of the pastry in the mould, then gently press together and trim off. Finger-crimp the edges to make a good seal.

Make nine $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch holes all round the top of the pie, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in from the rim. Make petals of pastry from the rolled-out trimmings, and form them into a rose in the centre of the pie top. Leave the pie overnight in the refrigerator, then brush with beaten egg before putting it in the oven.

BAKING THE PIE

After leaving it for several hours, place pie in the centre of the oven and bake for six hours at 300 degrees Fahr. (or gas mark 1 to 2). Keep an eye on the oven in case it tends to run a little hot. In this case, cover the pie with two thicknesses of greaseproof paper.

Let the pie cool for two hours. Then, using a funnel, pour the strong strained jelly stock from the veal and bone heated to 160 degrees Fahr., into the nine holes.

To judge whether or not the stock will make a firm enough jelly, do this: Strain it the first day and simmer to reduce it to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints. Leave it in a basin overnight and, next morning, one can see if it will form a firm jelly—*which it must do*. If gelatine is required to strengthen it, judge whether $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1 oz. will be required. Wet it with a tablespoon or so of cold water, add it to the stock and stir it over a low heat until it is dissolved and reaches 160 degrees Fahr. At the same time, taste to see if it requires more salt, because gelatine does tend to blanket both flavour and seasoning.

TO REMOVE THE BAND

This may require a little patience. Slip the pie from the baking sheet and stand it on an inverted cake tin or flat-bottomed basin, slightly smaller than the pie itself. Then gently press the band down and off. If it is stubborn and stays put, tightly wring out a towel soaked in hot water and tie it around the band. Give it time to heat the metal, then ease down the band with a little persuasion, leaving the pie on its "prop."

SERVING THE PIE

To serve the pie, cut it straight across in half, so that the layers of white and dark meat, the square of ham and the speckles of pistachio nuts are revealed. It is a pretty sight to set before one's guests! The pie can then be cut into slices or wedges of whatever size suits you.

WINES to serve and

WINES to buy as presents

BY PAMELA VANDYKE PRICE



B.B.C.

Pamela Vandyke Price is the first person outside the wine trade to be allowed to sit the lectures for the Wine Trade Club Education Committee's annual examination. She came second, beating 85 men in the business

A delightful landlady I once had used to enjoy pudding and mince pies washed down with alternate sips of cherry brandy, Chartreuse and Advocaat. And why not? Drinks served at the Christmas table can be just as varied as the Christmas dinner itself is rigid. First, the *apéritif*. Well-chilled Champagne is perfect for the occasion. It's a party tradition in itself; it takes the edge off family gatherings that may have underecurrents of irritation and, for anyone who has been coping with children and chores in a crowded house and hot kitchen since early morning, it is the perfect reviver. A good non-vintage costs from 25s. to 30s. a bottle.

The meal is almost bound to be based on a bird, and here I'd like to dispose of a couple of pieces of wine chi-chi that crop up every Christmas. The first is that white wines are more suitable for drinking by "ladies and young persons" because they are less intoxicating than red ones. The second is that old saw, "white wines with white meat." The first is totally unfounded on fact; the second may, in some circumstances, be good advice—but just how white is roast turkey, goose, duck or chicken plus stuffings, gravies, sausages and sauces? For my Christmas meal I'd have two wines: 1. a white one for a first glass all round with the first course, and then for those who genuinely want to go on drinking it; 2. a red wine for the bird. As this is a time when wine is drunk rather than discussed, I'd go for something good in the medium-price range, rather than a very expensive bottle that requires handling with care and appraising at leisure. My personal taste inclines to claret, so I'd select one of the 1953s, which are now most amiably drinkable: of the classed growths of the Médoc, either the light, charming Château Palmer (Margaux), London-bottled, at about 18s., or the velvety St. Juliens, Léoville-Poyferré and Léoville-Barton, also London-bottled, for 16s. to 17s. People liking a slightly more solid sort of claret might buy one of the St. Emilion or Pomerol named growths for 9s. or 10s., or a slightly better-known growth, such as the Château Ripeau, for 14s., or the great Cheval Blanc for 24s.

If Burgundy is your preference—especially if you are having game—then I'd suggest a 1953 or 1955 wine from the Beaujolais, perhaps a Juliénas or Moulin à Vent, for smooth, fresh drinkability and plenty of character in the 10s. to 13s. price range. A little dearer, the wines of the Côte d'Or, with all the famous names such as Pommard, Volnay, Beaune, Nuits St. Georges, Corton, Clos de Vougeot and Chambertin, offer a wide choice for the same two years. But here the deciding factor should be the advice of a wine merchant who knows his shippers: a London-bottled Burgundy can be very good, but a wine with exactly the same name as a good one may be a fat, cloying, "souped up" affair. So the policy of the house that ships it is all-important.

A white wine with a meal of this kind should, I think, be crisp, refreshing, definite in character and not too subtle—the food is too varied, the occasion too carefree. If I served a red Burgundy, my alternative white wine might be a white Côte du Rhône, such as the 1953 or 1955 Chante Alouette, for about 13s., or a white Burgundy, say one of the 1955 Meursaults or Chassagne-Montrachets in the 15s. to 17s. range. To partner claret, I'd pick an Alsatian wine, especially a Riesling, costing from 18s. to 20s. a bottle (some authorities find this the perfect wine for a goose, as it cuts across the richness). All these white wines are good buys at Christmas anyway, because they go well with cold meat, and the Alsatians are especially pleasant as *apéritifs*. Jugoslav wines of the Riesling and Sylvaner type and Commonwealth wines of the hock type are good value and slightly cheaper; then there are the refreshing Portuguese "green wines" around 15s. a bottle and the German Steinwein, in its squat "boxbeutel," about 20s., all suitable for drinking with aftermath meals.

The pudding stage of the Christmas meal really does not need a wine to itself but the association of dessert with port and Madeira is a sound tradition. No need to find a great vintage port or an historic Madeira; just a pleasant, lightish wine, such as a Bual or Malmsey, or one of those fine, delicate old tawny ports that are drunk so much in Oporto. A bottle of the best will cost about 26s., and if the ladies are to be banished from the table at this stage, I hope that either they take a full glass with them, or that the hostess provides another decanter in the drawing-room before coffee.

Now for presents. Wine-giving is made easy at the last minute because of the cases specially made up at Christmas time, but I prefer to make my own selections. After all, I know my friends better than even the best of wine merchants. When in doubt, I reiterate with Dorothy Parker:

"Three are the things I shall never attain—
Envy, content and sufficient Champagne."

But, grateful as I'd be for a bottle, a magnum or a case, I would like to be given Champagne for myself alone, so I like giving half or quarter bottles (the latter from 7s. 6d. each), which provide courage or consolation for anyone living on their own. The same goes for table wines—sometimes I want to give these to *individuals*, not even the nicest of their family and friends—and half bottles of claret or Burgundy can either be drunk by oneself (interesting samples to guide future buying), or, at a *tête à tête*, enable two different wines to be served at a meal without a feeling of things being overdone.

For friends who like entertaining, especially the young marrieds or bed-sitter set, the big jars of white or red wine or sherry offered by

continued overleaf



many suppliers, or a case or half-dozen bottles of inexpensive white or *rosé* wine all provide a good basis for a party. And for the hospitable connoisseur—which we should all like to think ourselves—there is magnificence about a magnum—of Burgundy or claret, as well as Champagne. At random from various lists I longingly select a domaine-bottled Chambolle-Musigny, les Amoureuses 1953, for 66s. (John Harvey), a Château Cheval Blanc 1947, for 56s. (Saccone and Speed), a Château Palmer 1950 for 38s. (Kettner), a 1947 Chambertin, Clos de Bèze for 48s. (Averys of Bristol) or—because I have never tried a magnum of white Burgundy and I imagine it might be a novelty to many people—a Chassagne Montrachet 1953 for 50s. (John Harvey). All lovely presents if you know that someone's dining-table habitually seats six to eight people.

Another idea is to choose two or three bottles of the same wine but of different years, so that these may be compared. This is most easily done with château-bottled claret, though you may have to shop around to get your selection. Failing this, choose a wine that has all been bottled by the same firm. There are the "holiday wines"—Portuguese, Swiss and Italian, to give to friends fond of regional food and drink and the offbeat wines. In this category come a range of Arbois and Jura wines that have recently been imported (Arthur Cooper of Reading has a good selection), also two new Muscadets that I have tried: one, Domaine de Chasseloir by Poiron et Chereau, 1957, retails around 10s. 6d. (Thresher & Co.) and the other, Château de la Bidière, 1958, is extremely good value for 8s. 9d. (Hedges and Butler). An interesting present might be Champagne "nature"—the still Champagne which most visitors to the Champagne area adore and which I had not thought was obtainable here at all—but it is, for 34s. a bottle (Kettner).

Liqueurs are a very personal taste but I would risk the newly imported Danish blackcurrant rum, Solbaerrom, which comes in attractive triangular bottles costing 19s. and 10s. 6d. Well chilled, it may be served as either an apéritif or a liqueur—and it is also delicious with pancakes, ice-cream or cheese, as it is fruity rather than sweet (Fortnum & Mason).



LET CATERERS COPE

(you can hire clowns, conjurers, and fancy dress, too)

PARTY CATERERS

Most of the following firms will tackle any kind of function, from a dinner party for four, to a reception or dance for several thousand. They will provide food and service only or (in some cases) decorations, music, cabaret—all depending on what is required. Prices vary accordingly. Most firms operate in London and the home counties, some go further afield.

- ❖ Searcy Tansley & Co.,
19 Sloane Street,
S.W.1. (SLO 5231)
(founded 1847, can deal with
any sort of function)
- ❖ Floris Bakeries Ltd.,
24 Brewer Street,
W.1. (GER 5421)
(from tea-parties upwards.
Dinners and parties with or
without service, with or without
drink)
- ❖ Fortnum & Mason Catering Dept.,
181 Piccadilly, W.1. (REG 8040)
(lunch for two or banquet for
1,500, including the band &c.)
- ❖ Mrs. Payne (party specialists),
5 Beauchamp Place,
S.W.3. (KEN 5271)
(travels all over the country,
gives advice and has original
ideas on decoration)
- ❖ J. Lyons Private Catering Dept.,
Cadby Hall,
W.14 (RIV 2040)
- ❖ Ring & Brymer (Birch's) Ltd.,
17 Finsbury Avenue.
E.C.2 (BIS 3674)
(well-known for City functions
like the Lord Mayor's banquet)
- ❖ John (Personal Services) Ltd.,
90A George Street,
W.1. (WEL 8581)
(speciality: liveried footmen.
Cocktail parties from 9s. 6d.
a head, including food, excluding
drink. House parties.
Own expert florist)
- ❖ Tiffin Catering Co. Ltd.,
Harewood Row.
St. Marylebone,
N.W.1. (AMB 1081-2)
(not dinner parties)
- ❖ Mayfair Catering Co. Ltd.,
34 North Row,
Park Lane, W.1. (MAY 0175)
(specialize in superb presentation)
- ❖ John Gardner Caterers Ltd.,
Bridge House,
London Bridge, S.E.1. (HOP 8000)
(cocktail parties from 30 to
3,000; London, home counties
and further afield)
- ❖ Hall & Roberts (Caterers) Ltd.,
22 Leicester Square.
W.C.2 (WIM 0453)
(speciality: hot *hors d'oeuvres*)
- ❖ Catering Arrangements Ltd.,
168 Regent Street,
W.1. (REG 3526)
(can quote from 10s. 6d. per
head *including drinks* for cocktail
parties and receptions)
- ❖ Cook & Butler,
20 Southfield Gardens,
Twickenham (RIC 3774 POP 9714)
(speciality: Swedish smörgåsbord
cold buffet)
- ❖ Good Catering
148 Walton Street,
S.W.3. (KNI 1222)
(food only)
- ❖ Help-You-Out-Service,
15 Beauchamp Place,
S.W.3. (KNI 4187)
(small dinners, cocktail parties,
children's parties. Individual
advice. Epicure service)
- ❖ Gunthers & Co. Ltd.,
29 Bruton Street,
W.1. (MAY 3418)
- ❖ Harrods, Outdoor Catering,
Knightsbridge,
S.W.1. (SLO 1234)
- ❖ Robin Brackenbury,
53 Kensington Court,
W.8. (REN 2667) (day)
(WES 3533) (evenings)
(personal service, menus and
prices worked out to suit
individual requests)
- ❖ La Terrasse,
364 King Street,
W.6. (RIV 6651)
(e.g. three-course chicken dinner
from 10s. 6d. per head inclusive)

PARTY ENTERTAINERS

Magicians, conjurers, ventriloquists, puppeteers, punch & judy shows, clowns or any other kind of children's party entertainer can be hired through the following firms. Some (like Harrods and the Savoy) can provide bands and floor shows for more adult occasions. It is important to book well ahead, as there is a big demand for this kind of thing during December and January.

Army & Navy Stores,
105 Victoria Street,
S.W.1. (vic 1234)

Ashton & Mitchell Ltd.,
2 Old Bond Street,
W.1. (MAY 7222)

Issy Bonn Enterprises Ltd.,
12B St. George Street,
Hanover Square,
W.1. (MAY 8601)

Fortnum & Mason,
(Catering Dept.),
181 Piccadilly,
W.1 (REG 8040)

Lew & Leslie Grade Ltd.,
235-241 Regent Street,
W.1. (REG 5821)

Hamley Bros.

200 Regent Street,
W.1. (REG 3161)

Harrods Ltd.,
Knightsbridge,
S.W.1. (SLO 1234)

Huntley's Entertainments,
102 Longley Road,
S.W.17. (BAL 4352)

Keith Prowse Ltd.,
90 New Bond Street,
W.1. (HYD 6000)

Savoy Hotel,
Entertainments Dept.,
Strand,
W.C.2. (TEM 4343)

Geo. Wall-Man,
60 Bickersteth Road,
S.W.17. (BAL 9767)

FANCY DRESS & NOVELTIES

As with entertainers, fancy dress should be hired as early as possible. Apart from children's parties, dances &c. firms hire out costumes to theatres, pantomimes, ice-shows—all very much in season at this time of year. There may therefore be a shortage if left too late. Some of these specialist shops might also come in useful if you want to make your own costumes, or if you are looking for Christmas-party decorations. The big stores, of course, also stock decorations, and most of them have a gift-wrapping service too.

Morris Angel & Son Ltd.,
117 Shaftesbury Avenue,
W.C.2. (TEM 5678)

M. Berman Ltd.,
18 Irving Street,
W.C.2. (TRA 1651)

Barnum's Carnival Novelties Ltd.,
67 Hammersmith Road,
W.14. (FUL 4440)
(including Father Christmas
outfits, decorations and even
roundabouts and swings)

V. Colin Edwards Ltd.,
Suite 35B,
119 Oxford Street,
W.1. (REG 2334)
(made to order only, not hire)

Ellisdons.
37-39 High Holborn,
W.C.1. (CHA 8961)
(masks, funny hats, noses,
Large department of
Christmas decorations)

Gamages,
Holborn,
E.C.1 (HOL 8484)
(Father Christmas outfits for
sale from £6 10s. complete.
Christmas decorations and
also conjuring department)

F. G. Kettle,
23 New Oxford Street,
W.C.1. (HOL 9764)
(especially good for wrapping
paper, boxes, tinsel &c.)

B. J. Simmons,
7, 8, 9 King Street,
W.C.2. (TEM 5568)

L. & H. Nathan,
12 Panton Street,
S.W.1. (WHI 5245)
(period costumes)

The Theatre-Zoo.
28 New Row,
W.C.2. (TEM 3150)
(animal costumes, Father
Christmas outfits and
carnival heads)



SOMETHING NEW IN PARTY GAMES

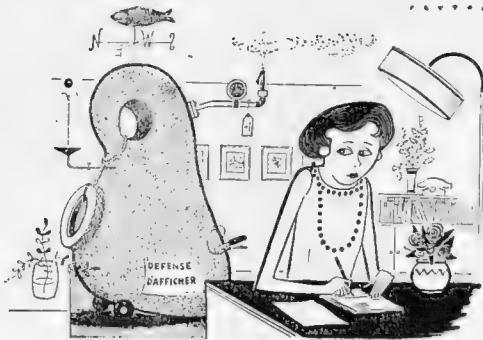
BY MARGARET MOSSOP

SECRETARIES: Ask each man to choose a girl to be his secretary. Provide the "secretaries" with paper and pencil and at the word "go" each man starts to dictate to his secretary a letter (which he composes impromptu) and his secretary takes down in longhand. The first couple to complete the letter (it is a good idea to fix a certain number of words) wins a small prize. This is a terribly amusing game, as everyone is talking at once, and it is extremely difficult for the "secretary" to hear what her "boss" is saying.

TIDDLY-WINKS UP THE STAIRS: Divide the company into two teams, and at the word "go" one person from each team takes a certain number of tiddly-winks to the bottom of the stairs and tries to flick them to the top of the stairs. The team with the highest number of firsts wins.

EATING JELLY WITH KNITTING NEEDLES: Prepare a jelly the day before, so that it is quite set. Place a small quantity on saucers for each guest and provide each with a pair of knitting needles, and they must proceed to eat the jelly with them. A slow and tedious performance, but amusing. This can be played either in teams or separately.

SUITCASES: Before the party, put the following into two suitcases: one pair pyjamas, a scarf, a hat, a coat, gloves. Divide the company into two teams. At the word "go" one member of each team opens the suitcase amid her team, dresses up in the articles inside, rushes upstairs or to another room, takes off the clothes, places them in the suitcase, returns to her team, then the next person goes, and so on, until all the team have had a turn. The team to finish first is the winner. Hectic.



The Complete Letter-writer

by Mary Macpherson

Sitting down to say thank you for the season's crop of presents need no longer be a chore. With the aid of this ingenious new system you can do it by numbers—and every letter will be suited individually to the recipient. Or that's what the author says . . .

SO MUCH CAN BE DONE BY TELEPHONE THESE DAYS that the few social occurrences needing the written word are approached with gloom and distress and paralysis of hand and brain. Letter-writing—as we are all far too fond of saying when we feel we need an excuse not to do some—has degenerated from a graceful art to an unmitigated horror. Think back to the last time you had to write a thank-you letter: "Dear Aunt Madge," you began dashingly . . . you congratulated yourself on getting down to the job so speedily . . . your straying eye noted a spider's web in the corner of the ceiling . . . you tilted your chair dangerously far back to get a better look at it . . . five minutes later you found that with no apparent effort at all you had (a) counted 573 stripes on your wallpaper, (b) drawn a fetching sketch of your poodle on the blotting paper, (c) decided that if there was enough lamb left you could have it minced on Saturday, and (d) written not a word to Aunt Madge.

It seems extraordinary to me that no one until now has produced a you-don't-need-to-do-it-yourself letter-writing kit. With one of these on your desk, you can compose a letter of thanks for anything from a Mercédès to a meat-dish, simply by picking the relevant phrases from four sections. No tiresome thought is involved.

SECTION I. Ecstasy Phrases, or Hooray Hooray for Auntie May

This includes the sort of sentence that is easy to think up if someone has sent you a cheque for a thousand pounds, a hi-fi, or a gift voucher for Balenciaga. Difficult, though, if you are the hopeless recipient of a marked-down-in-the-sales dishcloth.

1. What a delightful surprise!
2. How *very* kind of you to think of me/us.
3. We rushed out straightaway to buy a licence!
4. Somehow, a present from abroad brings special excitement!
5. I *always* say you can't beat British workmanship!
6. I really don't know how to express my gratitude.
7. How sweet of you to remember us/me/Mary/John at Christmas.
8. You must have searched Paris/New York/the Portobello Road for that enchanting —!
9. Such fun to be able to go out and choose for ourselves!
10. It gave us endless amusement!
11. I/we/Mary/John were enchanted by your lavish gift.
12. Thanks to your generosity, Mary/John now has enough money to buy the doll's house/stamp album she/he so wanted.
13. It has caused enormous interest among the neighbours.
14. How we wished you were here to enjoy it with us!



SECTION II. *The Worm-i'-the-Bud technique, or it's not the thought that counts with me.*

Many of us find, halfway through our letter, a strong desire to make it plain that, grateful as we are, we weren't born yesterday, and can recognize a this year's calendar stuck on last year's picture as well as the next man.

1. It brightens up that little dark corner in the spare room beautifully.
2. Did you know it has to have an import licence?
3. We are keeping him/her/it/the darling little chameleon in the bathroom for the time being.
4. Your home-made shortbread/potato wine/paper-chains have become quite a part of our Christmas festivities!
5. It is so nice to get something useful rather than merely pretty.
6. What a very ingenious use of fir-cones/felt/cotton reels!
7. I have never seen anything quite like it before.
8. You never told me you had taken up pottery!
9. How useful it will be if we ever move into a bigger flat!
10. I'm afraid the wrapping had come undone, but there are quite a lot left.
11. Scandalous, isn't it, the duty one has to pay on parcels from abroad!
12. What an *amusing* idea!
13. John/Mary is getting married next week, so he/she is keeping the charming little Tinkle Teddy/Woo-Woo Engine/Splash Splash bath toy for the future!
14. You really shouldn't have done it.

SECTION III. *Filler Phrases, or two more lines and I'm over the page.*

A thank-you letter may well be considered brusque if you simply say "thank you" and leave it at that. The impression the thankee must have is that you are so enchanted by writing to him that you can hardly bear to lay down your pen. A hopeless task, you may well think, but take heart.

1. What a seasonable/unseasonable Christmas it has been, with all the snow/fog/earthquakes/hurricanes/monsoons/ice/rain/heatwaves we have had!
2. I wish you could see our garden. It is already a mass of snowdrops/crocuses/tulips/wallflowers/dahlias/orchids, believe it or not!
3. I have heard some very interesting news about Aunt Jane/Cousin Michael/Mrs. Smith/that friend of John's you met at Eastbourne, but I think it had better wait until I see you.
4. Little Mary has just toddled in and said the sweetest thing. She said, "Mummy, when is [insert name of thankee] coming to watch me say my prayers?" She is getting to be quite a little chatterbox/tomboy/nuisance.
5. And what news of your family? Is Edward/Elizabeth safely over his/her whooping-cough/chicken-pox/mumps, german measles/11-plus? We do hope Peter/Anne is happy and settled at last with his/her new job/husband.
6. We/I look forward so much to seeing/meeting you next week/next month/soon, and thanking you personally for your delightful gift.

SECTION IV. *The Graceful Goodbye, or, pass me the stamps, that's this one dealt with.*

This is easy enough. It is either:

1. Respectful: Please give my regards to Mr. Smith, Yours sincerely, or



2. Familiar: Love from us all, and do let us hear from you soon.

Once you have the component parts of a letter, it is a simple enough matter to fit them together.

If the tone of your letter is to be startled and genuine gratitude, you will stick mainly to Section I, with a dash of Section III, and the appropriate phrase from Section IV. If, alternately, the gift has not sent you giddy with delight, you will pick a perfunctory phrase from Section I, slide smoothly into Section II, and in desperation to get over the page, use practically all of Section III. Which will make pretty curious reading, but no matter. Few people actually read a thank-you letter—the mere fact that you have sent a piece of paper through the post with words on it is enough.

Here follow two sample letters to demonstrate that letter-writing can be *fun*.

¶ You are the anxious-to-help-him-get-ahead wife of a rising young junior executive. The head of his firm & Mrs. Marchbanks have sent you a pretty Danish salad-bowl. You yourself have met him but not her yet, and the office party is next week. Naturally in this instance you will not allow the cold wind of Section II to blow away the ladder from under your husband's feet; take your pick from Section I, Section III and the respectful alternative of Section IV, e.g. Section I, items 1, 2, 4, 6, 8. Section III, items 1, 2, 6. Section IV, item 1.

Dear Mrs. Marchbanks,

What a delightful surprise [and] how very kind of you to think of us. Somehow, a present from abroad brings special excitement with it! I really don't know how to express my gratitude—you must have searched Copenhagen for that enchanting salad bowl.

What an unseasonable Christmas it has been, with all the heatwaves we have had. I wish you could see our garden. It is already a mass of wallflowers, believe it or not!

I look forward so much to meeting you next week and thanking you personally for your delightful gift.

Please give my regards to Mr. Marchbanks, Yours sincerely.

¶ You are the harassed mother of three energetic young children, and live in a top-floor flat that isn't quite big enough. An elderly and relatively well-off member of your husband's family has sent you a three-foot china jar, too awkward to use as an umbrella stand, too ugly to use as a decorative piece. You have a vague memory of having seen it in her house many years back. (This is where Section II comes into its own.) Select: Section I, item 7. Section II, items 12, 9, 1, 5, 14. Section III, items 3, 4. Section IV, item 2.

Dear Great-Aunt Emma,

How sweet of you to think of us at Christmas [and] what an amusing idea! How useful it will be if we ever move into a bigger flat—in the meantime it brightens up that little dark corner in the spare room beautifully. It is so nice to get something useful rather than pretty, but you really shouldn't have done it.

I have heard some very interesting news about Cousin Michael, but perhaps it had better wait until I see you. Little Mary has just toddled in and said the sweetest thing. She said, "Mumimie, when is Great-Aunt Emma coming to watch me say my prayers?" She is getting to be quite a little chatterbox!

Love from us all, and do let us hear from you soon.

How simple it is, once you use method! All you have to do now is sit down and wait for the presents to roll in. Don't expect too many *next* year, though!

TALKING ABOUT GIFTS (AND YOU WILL BE) ...

Here are some pictures that may plant in female minds an idea that should only be mentioned in small type: **WHY NOT TOUCH HIM FOR A SKIN?**



The wind may be blowing and there's always the chance that the snow will be snowing but you can weather the storm in elegant furs like these, shown in a Kingston ice factory. There's no need at all to endure sub-zero temperatures (though the price may spiral) in a coat like the Persian lamb (*above*) with its push-up sleeves and great shawl collar of Alaska seal—price: 289 gns. at Maxwell Croft, New Bond Street, W.1—or the racoon (*left*) with big turn-up cuffs and a half-belt at the back, price: 360 gns. at Albert Hart, Curzon Street, W.1

continued on page 44

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHEL MOLINARE



By Appointment
to Her Majesty The Queen
Scotch Whisky Distillers
James Buchanan & Co. Ltd

To friends at home and abroad,

Greetings for a Happy Christmas

and a Good New Year

'BLACK & WHITE'

SCOTCH WHISKY

"BUCHANAN'S"

JAMES BUCHANAN & CO. LTD., GLASGOW AND LONDON

TOUCH HIM FOR A SKIN!

continued

Pre-season promptings can result in a well-arranged Christmas surprise (he'll think it was his idea). You'll be glad to settle for the black Alaska seal (*left*), shaped by Calman Links into a winter greatecoat with big pockets, side vents and a dipping half belt. The price: £900. Jenny Fischer made the Tartar hat in silver fox tails which costs 15 gns.



His love might measure up to mink (you can but try). The one below costs 1,800 gns. and is by S. London. The skins are precision-matched EMBA Lutetia in a silvery, silken fall from a neck-framing collar





Proof against Christmas and New Year chills is this blonde hamster coat with additions of wild mink at collar and cuffs. Light and warm, it costs £185 from the National Fur Company. Worn here with Jenny Fischer's beret of ranch mink tails

TOUCH HIM
FOR A SKIN

concluded



Svelte city coat in black Persian lamb (*above*) has a swansdown contrast of white fox hat with black velvet bows by Jenny Fischer. The wrap-around coat costs 385 gns. from Zwirn, Prince's Street, W.1, the hat 15 gns. The ocelot greatcoat (*left*) with square pockets and wide-set abbreviated sleeves runs high in the popularity stakes and the financial (it costs around 1,000 gns. at Bradleys). Hat by R.M. costs £16 19s. 6d. at Debenham & Freebody. Kimono coat in seal (*right*) has wide, shortened sleeves. Worn with a mink tie in creamy Palomino. The coat costs 325 gns., tie (as a separate) 45 gns. Both from Maxwell Croft





'Well, here's mud in your eye!'

If you're up against friends who seem to have
absolutely everything, you can be confident
that a plastic garden pond like this would make



THE YEAR'S MOST ORIGINAL PRESENT

To avoid being the year's most unpopular
giver, though, better find out first exactly what
you're letting yourself (and the recipient) in for

Q. What's the point of a *plastic* garden pool, anyway?

A. Well, they're easy to install, they don't crack and leak, and on average they cost about £10 only.

Q. Just *how* easy to install?

A. Simply dig a hole the necessary size and drop the pool in. If you move house you can dig the pool up and take it with you. It should last indefinitely.

Q. Will fish and water plants live in it?

A. They thrive, provided the pool is properly balanced with oxygenating plants, scavenger snails &c. like any other pool. Some plastic pools even make special provision for the cultivation of water lilies.

Q. How?

A. There are two wells in the middle of the model made by Perry's of Enfield, the water-plant people. These give an extra foot of depth for the lilies to be planted in.

Q. How big is the pool, then?

A. Six feet long and three feet wide. In each corner there is also a shelf to contain loam for other water plants. You just sprinkle fine shingle after the plants have been bedded and that keeps the water clean and clear.

Q. Sounds as though it must be rather a business getting all the bits and pieces to put in.

A. No, this particular pool is sold complete—fish, snails, plants and pool for 18 gns.

You can have a round one . . .



Q. So you'd have to spend Christmas day digging like mad to install the pool before the livestock died?

A. Of course not. The items are sent by instalments—first, the pool, then the plants, then the fish and snails, with instructions at every stage.

Q. You dig the pool in and wait?

A. Yes, that's what I did. Then a week afterwards instructions were sent to me telling me to fill the special holes with loam. Then the plants arrived and I planted them as shown in the leaflet, sprinkled some shingle around liberally, and filled the pool with water from the garden hose. I enjoyed that part!

Q. What about the fish?

A. They came with the aquatic snails a couple of weeks later, giving time for the pool to become acclimatized and for the plants to settle firmly in the soil.

Q. I bet there's a lot of work keeping the thing clean after it's installed.

A. If you have enough of the right plants and snails you won't need to do *any* cleaning. They keep the water sweet, along with the fish. At first the water *will* get cloudy and scummy, but that's a natural process and the water will clear later. It may take several months.

Q. Is this the only plastic pool?

A. By no means. There are several types on the market. There is the "Bastion," which is made to look as natural as possible and has irregular-shaped sides to fit into an informal garden. It also has two shallow ends so that fish can be fed easily. You can get it in three colours and two sizes—blue, green or light stone, and 7 ft. by 3 ft. or 4 ft. 3 in. by 3 ft.

Q. Where can I get it, though?

A. Harrods and Gammages stock it. It has a cable tube for a fountain, by the way, and an overflow. It's made of fibreglass.

Q. Any other types?

A. Square and oblong models for formal gardens are made by Herbert Dales & Partners. Their pools are made of fibreglass and plastic lamination, making them flexible, so that they line the hole in the ground. There is a plastic flange that is hidden and held in place by a surround of paving stones.

Q. Where can I get this type?

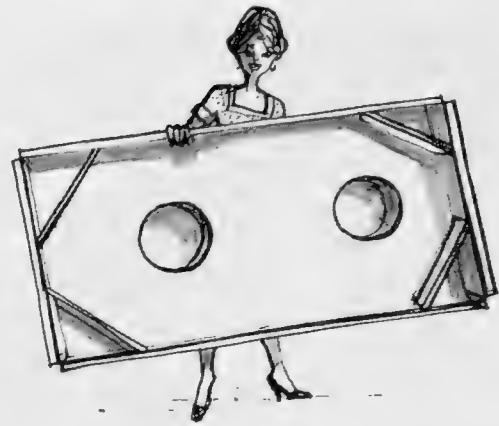
A. So far the firm only supplies customers direct. You'd have to write to Foster Works, New Cublington, Leamington Spa, and all details and instructions would be sent. The sizes are 3 ft. 2 in. by 5 ft. 2 in. and 1 ft. deep (£5 5s.), 5 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. 3 in. (£8 8s.) and 5 ft. 6 in. by 7 ft. 4 in. (£12 12s.). The last two are both 18 in. deep.

Q. Can lilies be grown in these pools, too?

A. Yes, so long as they're planted in wire baskets filled with loam. There are many other plants available, too—reeds and iris for example. You can buy "package" selections from Perry's of Enfield for prices ranging from 8s. 6d. to £6 7s. 6d. (this one brings you 43 plants!). If a friend already has a garden pool you could send a present of one of these packages—the firm sees to the whole thing if you send a cheque and the address.

Q. Apart from pools have you any other ideas for gardeners?

A. The best bet is to send a gift voucher. Carter's Tested Seeds Ltd. (of Raynes Park, London, S.W.20) have a colourful one like a Christmas card, and it can be made out for any amount. Sutton & Sons Ltd. of Reading also provide a pretty card and both firms forward their catalogue along with the voucher so that the recipient can choose whatever he or she wants in plants, bulbs or garden equipment. If you don't wish the amount to be mentioned but would like to send a plant or bulbs to friends in the central London area Rassells of the Earls Court Road have a way out. They merely put on their gift voucher "1 Rhododendron from so and so"—or whatever is chosen. In sending a present for the garden you at least have the satisfaction of knowing that, long after other Christmas gifts have been spent and forgotten, yours will be there throughout the year!



... or you can have an oblong one



You just dig the hole, then drop the pool into it

BY
MAUREEN
WILLIAMSON



In Russia this Christmas they'll be buying books—English ones—in a big way. This Moscow shop sells around 200 a week in normal times at an average 7.15 roubles (about 4s.) a copy. Modern writers are in chief demand but the Victorians are not abandoned though Dickens is no longer regarded as the *dernier cri* on the English social scene. The bookshelf shown provides a catholic range from Wilde to Katherine Mansfield with Scott rubbing bindings against a mining textbook. But one involuntary Russian literary export will still be missing from the Muscovite booklists this Christmas—Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*

THE RUSSIAN BOOKSHELF

What they'll be buying

in Moscow

PHOTOGRAPHS BY IDA KAR

Buyers queue at the Books in English counter. Culture is a business and you can't ignore the British when it comes to writing. "Tovarich, do you have a copy of the latest Graham Greene?"





Among Moscow's students the "angries" are popular—Osborne is now published in Russian—but this girl's choice is Victorian fare, a paper-back edition of Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*. Happiest manifestation of the boom in foreign book sales is the popularity of children's classics like *Pinnochio* and *Alice*



Booklovers must browse, few resist the temptation to peep at the end. Russia's state publishing houses are churning out books by the million—new editions of Hardy, Mann, Dreiser, Eliot, Wells, with Doris Lessing and Alan Paton among the moderns. Forecast is that 1960 will be busier yet

Magie 'Baton'

Trésor 'Pendant'

Trésor 'Tear Drop'

Magie 'Sphere'

Envol 'Amphora'

LANCÔME

PERFUME SUGGESTIONS
FOR CHRISTMAS

LANCÔME

Flèches d'Or

ARTISTS IN CHURCH *continued from page 10*

MODERN ANGELS for Coventry Cathedral are among the panels designed by John Hutton in his London studio. Along with his saints they will adorn the cathedral's west wall



ANCIENT ANGELS from the Victoria & Albert museum: a French 15th-century wooden carving of the Annunciation (above), another Annunciation angel (above left) in wood from Nino Pisano's workshop, mid 14th century, and (left) a German angel in limewood, early 16th century, by Tilman Riemenschneider



Each of us has a personal selection of Christmas images of special importance. Some of my own especial treasures are to be found at the Victoria & Albert. There is the delicate, lyrical little Florentine Madonna, 15th century, with a fragile innocent face and thin hands, who leans her cheek against the child's head lightly and tenderly and sits a little crooked in her chair to balance the baby. There is the cheerful, homely German early 16th-century Madonna, with long curls, a spry flat hat and a rather smug small smile, holding in a jolly and not at all reverent manner a son with a small version of her own face and two prominent ears. And there are three angels—a cool, elegant and wingless Angel of the Annunciation of the mid 14th century, Gothic and quiet; a German Baroque angel in gilded wood, all arching wings and swirling drapery, riding the air in passionate flight, the right sort of angel to shout aloud in the cold Christmas sky; and my favourite Angel of the Annunciation, in painted wood from France, 15th century, slim, simple, stylized, and with an astonishing smile that combines superhuman perfection and purity with a reassuring, extremely worldly, supremely Gallic good cheer.

My best-loved Holy Children are those who—far from being newly born—are stout, active ten-month-old bouncers, bribed to keep still with bead necklaces and kittens and fruit (like Crivelli's decidedly plain pudgy Child with corkscrew curls and mammoth golden apple, and Massaccio's cross Holy Infant in the National Gallery, moodily munching grapes with both hands at once and wearing nothing but a halo in gold leaf). These favourites of mine belong to a time when the painting or the carving was simply a lucky, and possibly lucrative, commission from a cardinal or a princely patron, when it was perfectly proper to paint your wife or mistress or the prettiest girl in the village as the Madonna or the Magdalene, and work in your patron and all the notables of the town in some good crowded set piece like the Calling of the First Apostles. Problems of balance, light, colour and perspective could be resolved in a detail of a landscape behind the stable and angel choir singing hosannas. Miracles of dramatically-lit still life, with bread, wine and out-of-season fruit, could be worked into a Last Supper. A local man with a splendid face and a pair of spectacles would pass pretty well as an adoring shepherd. What helped everyone must have been the climate of belief, the acceptance of the tradition—inside which you could explore and invent and experiment—that the figures and scenes and narrative of the Old and New Testaments were the best possible subjects on which an artist could work.

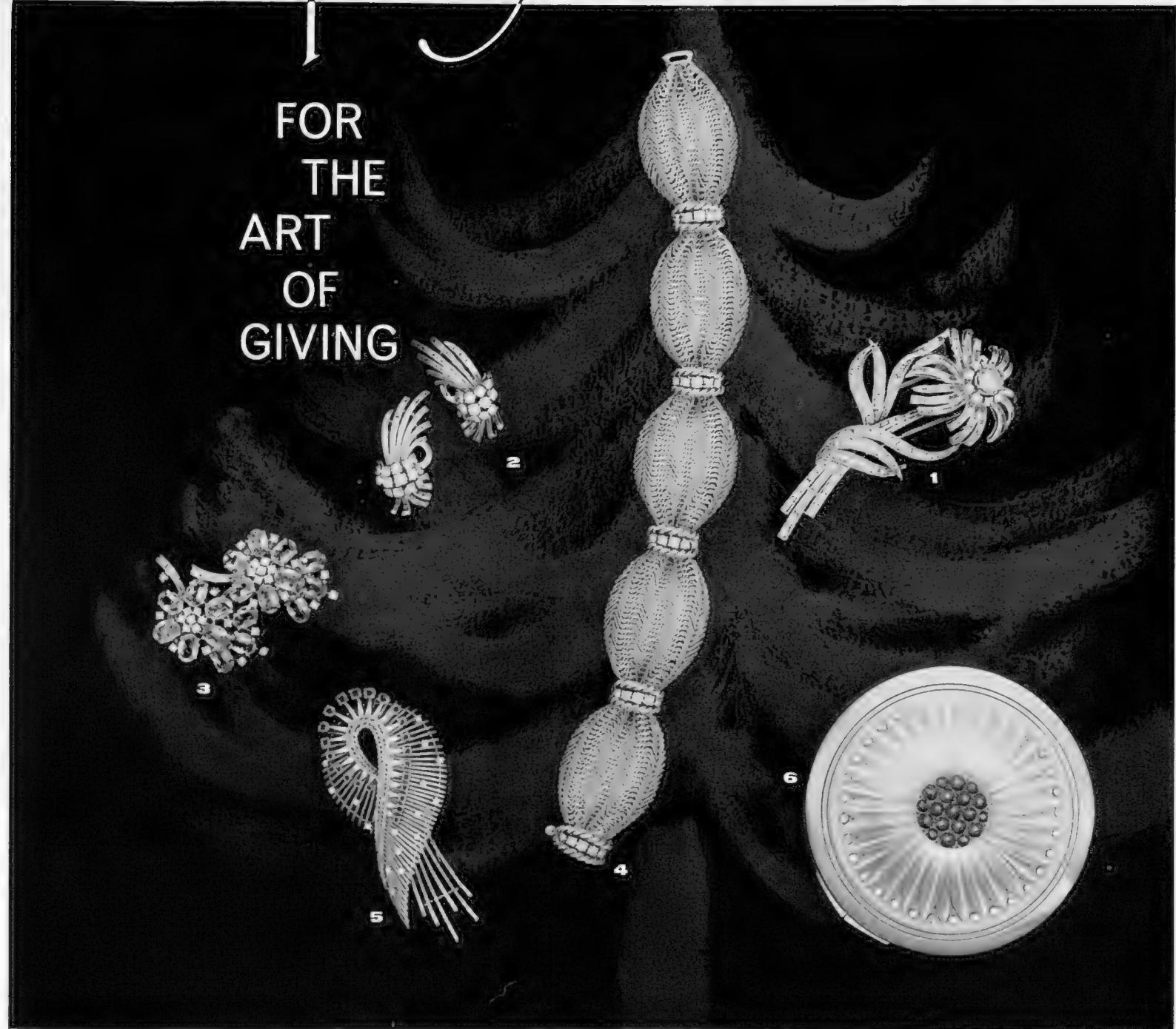
But all that is different now. It has become "Masterpieces of Christian Art," a thing for national museums and churches you visit with a guide-book in one hand. At Christmas at least we are all safe and sure. We can stop wincing with anxiety when we think of the problems and paralysis of contemporary religious art, take off our solemn when-is-a-church-not-an-art-gallery faces and rejoin the hefty holy toddlers and the heavenly hosts carolling away and playing like mad upon harp, dulcimer and lute in a glory of gold scarlet and blue. Thanks to those vital pre-agnostic five years, it is almost, almost possible, even for the godless but ever hopeful, to look at a Piero della Francesca Nativity and understand, just faintly, something of what those angels and shepherds and Joseph sitting on a donkey's saddle in the background could have meant to the eyes that saw them first in Sansepolcro five centuries ago.



By Appointment to H.M. the Queen, Silversmiths & Jewellers

Asprey

FOR
THE
ART
OF
GIVING



1 Diamond spray brooch with canary yellow diamond centre, £950. 0. 0.

2 Diamond ear clips, £525. 0. 0.

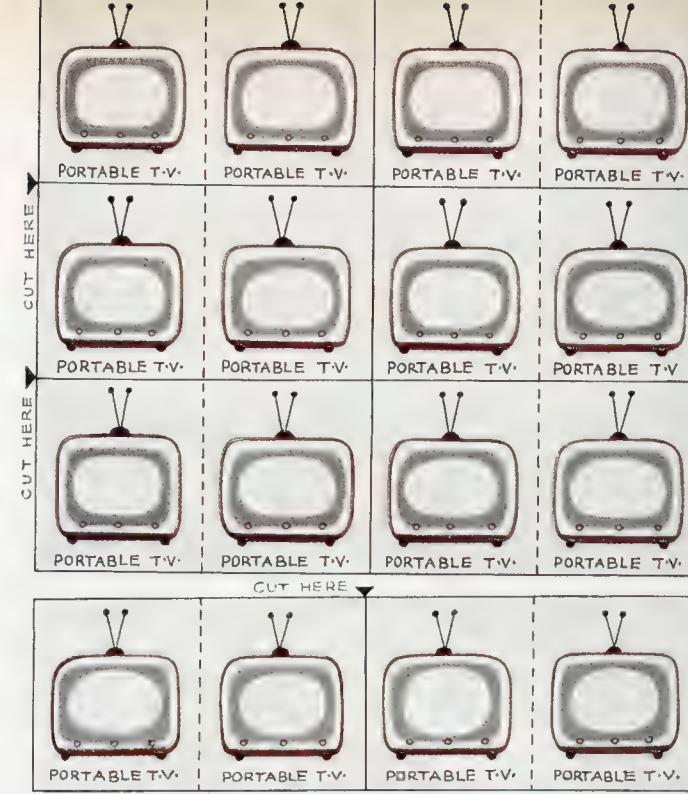
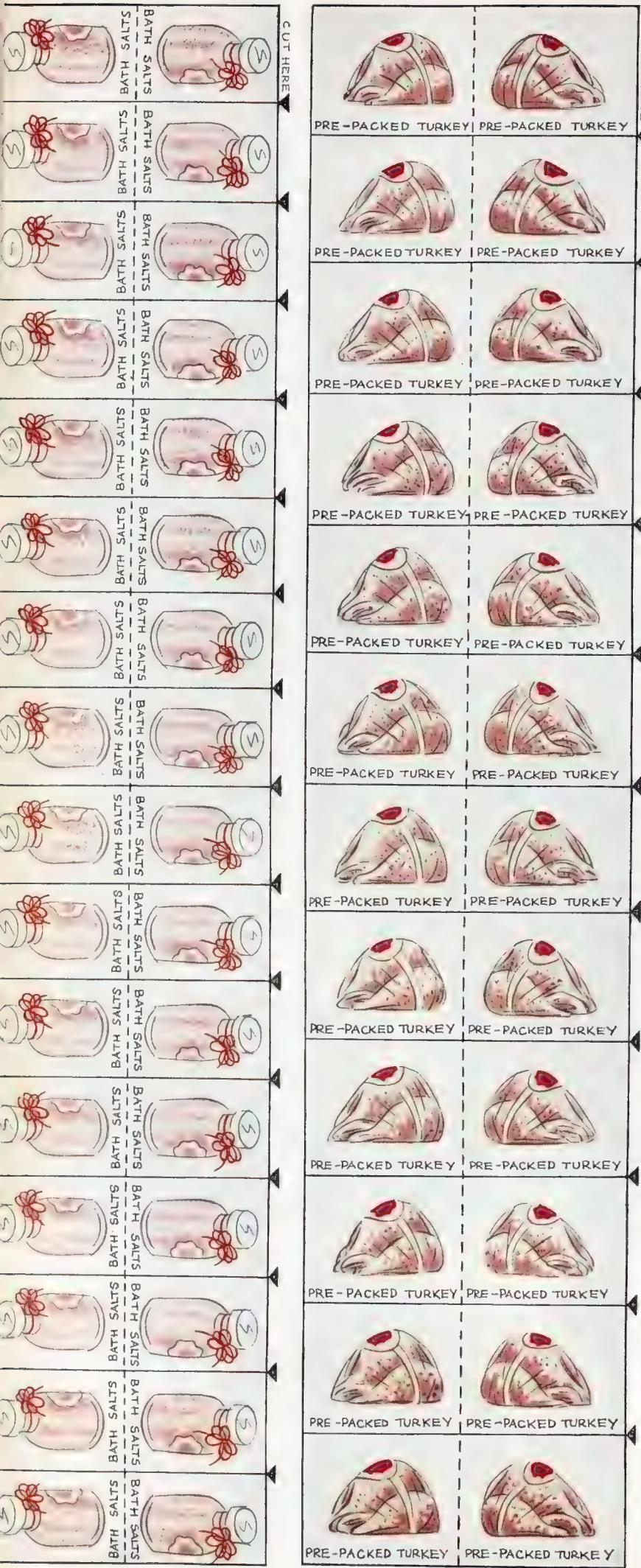
3 Double clip of aquamarines and diamonds, £355. 0. 0.

4 Bracelet of gold mesh with diamonds, £330. 0. 0.

5 Gold, ruby and diamond brooch, £165. 0. 0.

6 Vanity case of 18 ct. gold set with diamonds and rubies, £440. 0. 0.

There are so many gift-inspirations in Asprey's Gift List: write for a copy to





Wayside shrine in the Dolomites

*Standard-Triumph International wish you
a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.*

STANDARD



TRIUMPH

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

Compliments of the season !

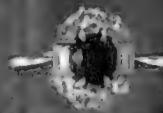
by HARGREAVES





By Appointment to
H.M. THE QUEEN
Silversmiths

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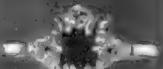
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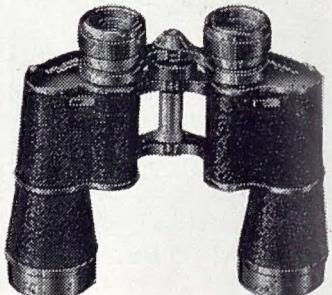
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